

R8 Young Professionals Committee

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Committee Goals

Our mission is to continue to engage, motivate and empower the young professionals, in Region 8.

Our goals are to encourage the young professionals to be leaders in their Sections; to be the bridge, transferring the region's high-level vision across our members and listening to our members' needs and requests; and to try new initiatives/projects.

Our activities' plan for the year include:

1. YP Affinity Groups, in Region 8 – monitor and continuous engagement
2. 2023 Region 8 Cross-Sectional SYP Congresses – conclude our 2023 cross-sectional congresses series
3. 2024 Region 8 SYP Congress – support, steering and participation in the event
4. Support the organization of meet-up events
5. Ideation, creation and implementation of a new YP initiative.

Progress against goals since the last report

- 1- 2024 IEEE Region 8 Student and Young Professionals Congress (IEEE R8SYP)

Another amazing edition of the biggest regional congress for student and YPs took place during summer, this time in the beautiful city of Grenoble. This event was once again coordinated between R8SAC and R8YP, with the leading of local volunteers from France section, both students and YPs. Sponsorship, registration process, visa process, program and logistics was all organized by the local team together with the help from R8YP team and R8SAC. The event counted with 320 registered participants, from >50 countries, many industry and IEEE VIPs and speakers and it had an expected 155k€ income, out of 65k€ coming from sponsors (72% of the 65k€ coming from IEEE sources).

Below are listed the highlights/impact of the R8 YPs in the event:

- a. R8 YP participation in the program

In this R8SYP edition, the young professionals expanded their program reach by not only including sessions targeting the R8 YP but also the IEEE YP and the France YP. We collaborated together and the YP leadership team spearheaded and moderated multiple keynote sessions, reaching all participants, and workshops and technical roundtable sessions, targeting climate, sustainability, technology and leadership topics. Some examples of the events:

- i. The **R8 YP workshop** that included in the program information on AG vitality, funding possibilities, awards and upcoming opportunities on how to be the host of one of the 2025 Cross Sectional Congresses. We also had a presence of other regional coordinators as well as IEEE staff that supported us throughout the workshop.

- ii. **Roundtable** about "Local Energy Communities"

The panel was attended by representatives from Tunisia, Germany, Kuwait, Switzerland, Greece and Palestine. The topics of global challenge of climate change, the transformation of the energy sector and the initiative of energy communities (groups of people that own their own renewable production) have been discussed and best practices from all countries have been presented.

- iii. Technical **workshop**, together with MTT-s society where it was given a highlight of the RF systems and current research in the area, tailored to master and PhD students that are currently studying in the area of electronics.

- b. Funding

Due to close collaboration with IEEE YP throughout the year, we manage to have an increased support, more than the usual meetup funding – this year, the IEEE YP were golden sponsors. The R8 YPs were also responsible for bringing in the support from IEEE Microwave Theory and Technology (MTT-s) society, also as a golden sponsor. Looking at the overall external sponsor income (excl. R8 OpComm contributions), the R8 YP were responsible for ~20% of the incoming budget.



2- 2025 IEEE Region 8 Cross-Sectional Congresses

In 2025, is again the year of the Region 8 Cross-Sectional Student and Young Professionals (SYP) Congresses. The goal is to be able to select a host for each of the 5 events. Throughout this year, several meetings between R8SAC and R8YP were held to understand what worked best during the last cross sectional congresses, in 2023. Out of these meetings, it was proposed a new division scheme for the sections such that it better represents our members needs. This scheme was approved by Region 8 Opcom and it is described below, alphabetically order:

Western SYP (WESYP)	Nordic SYP (NSYP)	Central European SYP (CEuSYP)	Africa SYP (ASYP)	Middle East and North Africa (MENASYP)
Benelux	Denmark	Austria	Botswana	Algeria
France	Estonia	Belarus	Burkina Faso	Bahrain
Germany	Finland	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Ethiopia	Egypt
Italy	Iceland	Bulgaria	Ghana	Iran
Malta	Kazakhstan	Croatia	Kenya	Iraq
Portugal	Latvia	Cyprus	Liberia	Jordan
Spain	Lithuania	Czechoslovakia	Mauritius	Kuwait
Switzerland	Norway	Greece	Nigeria	Lebanon
UK and Ireland	Russia	Hungary	South Africa	Libya
	Sweden	Israel	Sudan	Morocco
		North Macedonia	Tanzania	Oman
		Poland	Uganda	Palestine
		Romania	Zambia	Qatar
		Serbia and Montenegro		Saudi Arabia
		Slovenia		Tunisia
		Turkey		United Arab Emirates
		Ukraine		Yemen

Manual was updated regarding the new cross sectional geographical groups and it was also updated regarding the financial clauses (lessons learned from the organization of the 2024 R8 SYP). The call to submit proposals to host one of the Cross-Sectional Congresses is open until **November 17th**.

3- R8 YP events in 2023 and 2024

Looking at the number of events, reported:

Year	# of events
So far, in 2024	217*
2023	380
2022	252

(*) Note that we are not still at the end of the year and there might be some events that have already taken place but were not submitted yet.

Here is a list of the most active and least active Affinity Groups in 2024 and 2023:

Top 5 most active AGs in 2024 (so far): Egypt (41), Kenya (17), Italy (16), Western Saudi Arabia (14), Slovenia (13)

→ Congratulations, well done!

With respect to events in 2023:

Top 5 most active AGs in 2023: Egypt (65), Hungary (30), Palestine (24), Western Saudi Arabia (19) and Lebanon (16)

→ Congratulations, well done!

Least active AGs in 2023: Algeria, Austria, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Denmark, Malta, Mauritius, Qatar, Kazakhstan, South Africa – Pretoria, South Africa – Cape Town, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Tanzania, Yemen

→ These AGs did not report any event in 2023, thus, they are not eligible for the 2023 rebate, sent out to the respective Sections, in August 2024. Here is an action point to the respective Section Chairs. If you need our help with revitalizing your affinity group, please contact us.

4- R8 participation in the IEEE YP funding, in 2023 and 2024

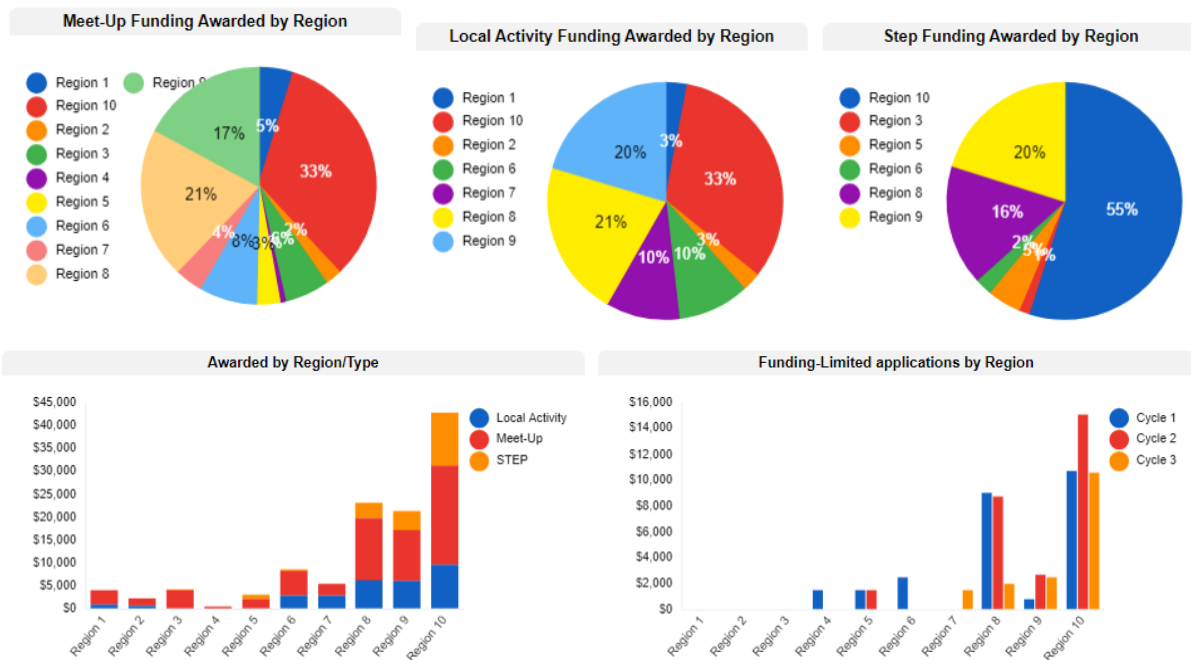


Figure 1- Event funding statistics per Region, data from October 2024.

Looking at the data from Figure 1, Region 8 is on the top 3 regions wrt to the three different types of YP funding, next to R10 and R9. Compared to last year, R8 is slightly lower on the total awarded – in 2023, R8 was awarded ~30k\$, while, so far in 2024, we are just above 25k\$ - thought, it is important to mention that there is still two months left until the end of the year. This year we are not the top region applying for meetups – R10 has topped the list for both 3 types of funding. Regarding this year distribution of funding, there is an increase in budget awarded to local activity and step events with respect to 2023. On the bottom right plot we can see that the most of the event applications happened in cycle 1 and 2 of the year, this is directly related with the first two quartiles of 2024, from January to June.

5- IEEE R8 Young Professionals Awards & R8YPs at IEEE MGA YP awards

Together with the R8 awards committee, the awards campaign was launched and 12 submissions were received. This year, we selected the most promising volunteers and (and active) affinity groups and contacted them directly – in the end, 50% of the submissions were from the people and affinity groups that were contacted. Thus, this seems to be a good practice.

6- Inter region collaboration & society collaboration

- a. In 2024, we invited the YP regional coordinators to attend the R8 SYP in Grenoble. In this edition, we not only got the participation of some regional coordinators as well as the IEEE YP team and staff were able to attend.

This turned out to be very useful, specially during the R8 YP workshop where we all could collaborate on best practices, including tips from all around the world.

- b. Collaboration with technical societies: throughout the year, many events were organized together with IEEE MTT-S. This proved to be a very good way to bring IEEE YP and societies closer where both members can benefit from each other programs, funding opportunities and volunteers.

7- IEEE R8 YP Meetups in 2024

- a. MELECON, Porto, Portugal, 25th June

Organized by the Portugal YP Affinity Group, the program included a round table event where participants were asked to brainstorm on IoT innovations and their impact on urban development, followed by an inspiring keynote by an IEEE volunteer that has been actively working in this topic, in Portugal Section.

- b. RTSI 2024, Lecco, Italy, September

The YP Italy Board, alongside YP Region 8, organized the “IEEE Young Professionals Event and Award” on September 20, 2024, including a Pitch Competition featuring 12 young researchers. Congratulations to the Pitch Competition winners:

- First Prize: Pietro Balatti (IIT Genova) - “Real-Move: effortless tracking, markerless motion.”
- Second Prize: Stefano Franceschini (Università di Napoli “Parthenope”) - “Novel Ultrasound Device for Contactless Finger Tapping Monitoring.”
- Third Prize: Luca Perbellini (Politecnico di Milano) - “Neural Network models for optimal power flow.”



- c. IEEE SASB Engagement Event, Athens, Greece, 23rd September

Organized by IEEE Greece Young Professionals in collaboration with IEEE Standards SA, a unique opportunity for attendees to engage with IEEE Standards Association staff and leading professionals in emerging technologies.



- d. European Microwave Week (EuMW), combination of 3 technical conferences, organized by EuMA and IEEE, Paris, France, 22th September

Organized by the R8 YP team, the program included a YP get together event. This event counted with more than 110 participants, mostly master and PhD students that joined after the workshop day. This proved to be a very good idea to bring together many different young professional researchers. The event consisted of an evening included bites, drinks and some networking games.

- e. Medpower 24, Athens, Greece, 3-6th November

- f. IHTC, Bari, Italy, 27-30th November

General note: The meetup events continue to have a lot of success. Young Professionals show particular interest in activities that are engaging and at the same time are technically challenging. For example, short pitches about their research followed by Q&A is very well attended as well as social meetup events organized at the end of the day.

8- New initiatives, possible new collaborations

In the last weekend of September, R8 YP attended the FIRST Global Challenge, a worldwide robot competition targeted to 14-18 years old. The R8 YP were invited to attend as VIP guest – representing IEEE at the competition. The weekend was full with interactions with the FIRST team, the goal is to see if there is the possibility for further collaboration between FIRST (non-profit organization promoting STEM activities) and IEEE.

Vitality of YP Affinity Groups within R8

With the goal of continuous engagement of our Sectional Young Professional Affinity Groups, here are some statistics about exemplary YP AGs within R8.

Out of the 80.4k R8 members, roughly 27.1k have an active YP membership. In Region 8, YP is, by far, the membership with more members!

Out of the 13 Sub-Sections and 60 Sections, we have currently 58 active affinity groups.

Looking at Figure 2, there are depicted 3 distribution plots of the number of R8YP members by membership status (in the top center), gender (top right) and membership years (bar plot, bottom).

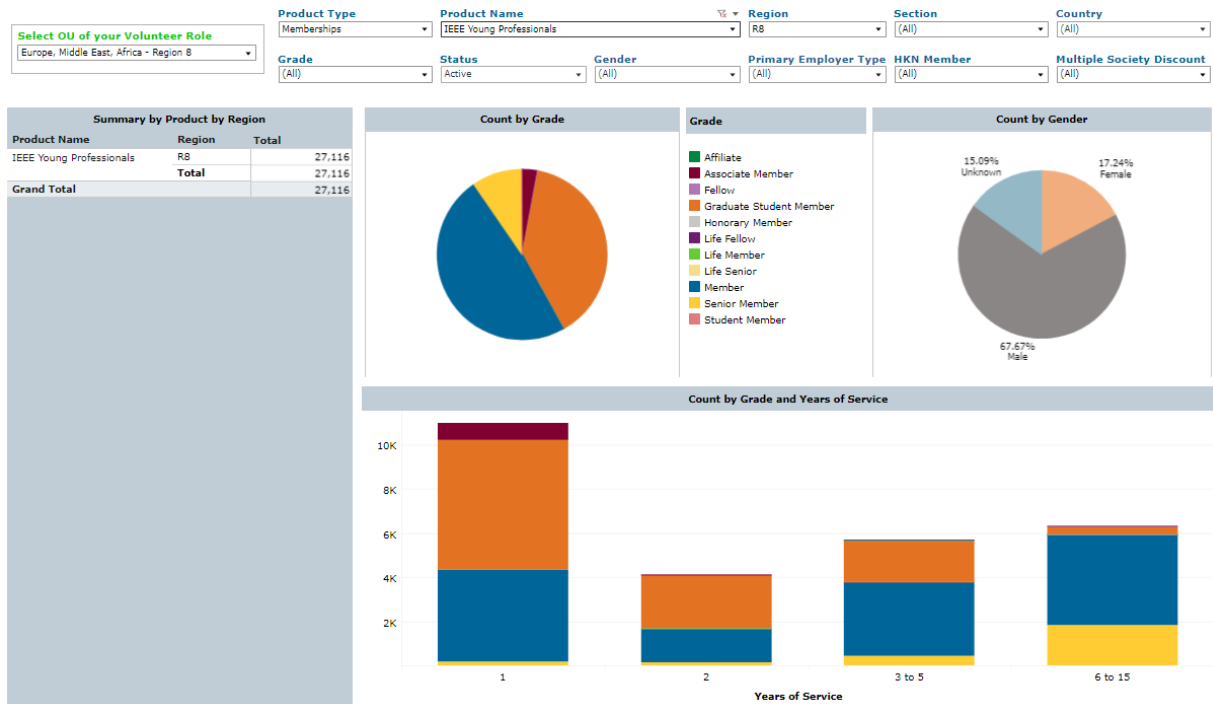


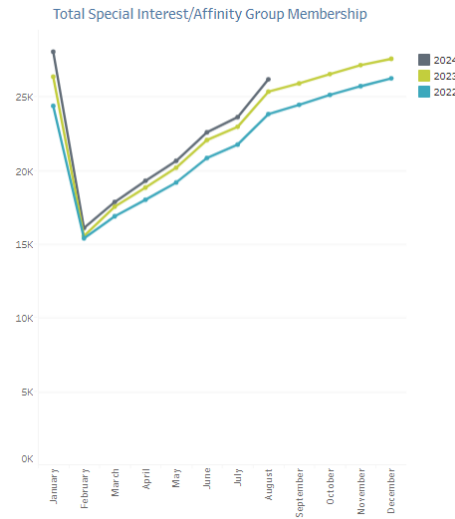
Figure 2- Data collected from OUNalytics about the Young Professional membership, in Region 8. Data from October 2024.

From OU Analytics, we could also single out the largest YP communities, this also has not changed compared to previous report.

Congratulations to the R8 top 3 YP communities (member-wise)!

1. UK & Ireland, with >3.9k YP members
2. Germany, with >3.7k YP members
3. Italy, with >3k YP members

Figure 3 shows the variation of the YP membership, per month, for the last 2 years. We can see that the "over the year" trend is very similar for both years - it has a great reduction of members from January to February due to the un-renewed memberships being processed.



	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
2024	28,027	16,078	17,839	19,276	20,625	22,563	23,595	26,156				
2023	26,331	15,543	17,524	18,817	20,164	22,038	22,937	25,316	25,876	26,507	27,120	27,548
2022	24,351	15,375	16,871	17,993	19,159	20,818	21,733	23,802	24,429	25,101	25,688	26,224

Figure 3- Year-over-year statistics of Region 8 YP membership totals, per month. Data from October 2024.

Until the end of the year, there is a crescent trend. In 2023, the YP membership in R8 grew by 6.4% wrt to the past year. In October 2024, we are now a bit earlier in the crescent curve, at the break-even of the number of members wrt to 2023 - we are now ~27.1k IEEE members (from Fig. 1) with an active YP membership, 2.3% higher than in October 2023.

R8 Young Professionals Points of Concern

The concerns from the previous report remain:

- 1- Being able to convey the IEEE Membership added value

This concern is directed to first year non-students, to whom the annual membership increases by more than 300%, from 27\$ to >100\$. Even though the Young Professional membership has no additional cost, in Region 8 it is by far the biggest membership thus we believe we should. Also, being able to provide benefits for our members to justify the membership annual value such that they renew it for another year (Referring back to the bar plot above).

Then, how do we keep ourselves relevant?

- 2- Decreased engagement by Affinity Groups and members retention

In line with the first point of concern, it is paramount to keep our relevance towards the affinity groups because they are our voice in their Section.

Looking at the R8 YP members distribution, in OU Analytics, it can be seen that the number of Affinity Groups (with more than 21 members) has decreased from 2023 to 2024. In Figure 4, there is the map of the density of YP members in Region 8 in February 2024 (left plot), and in October 2024 (right plot).

As it is clearly seen the number of sections with YP members has still not picked up since last year – it is important to have in mind that in March is when IEEE system drops the memberships that were not renewed.

Most relevant conclusions from this figure are:

- Overall, there is a 2.3% increase in YP membership wrt to October 2023;
- At the moment we have 58 Affinity Groups registered however only 53 Affinity Groups with active YP members – it is paramount that the section chairs from these section take action, and try to understand what is happening with the YP members.

Thus the question remains, how to keep YP members engaged and how to better serve our Affinity Groups?

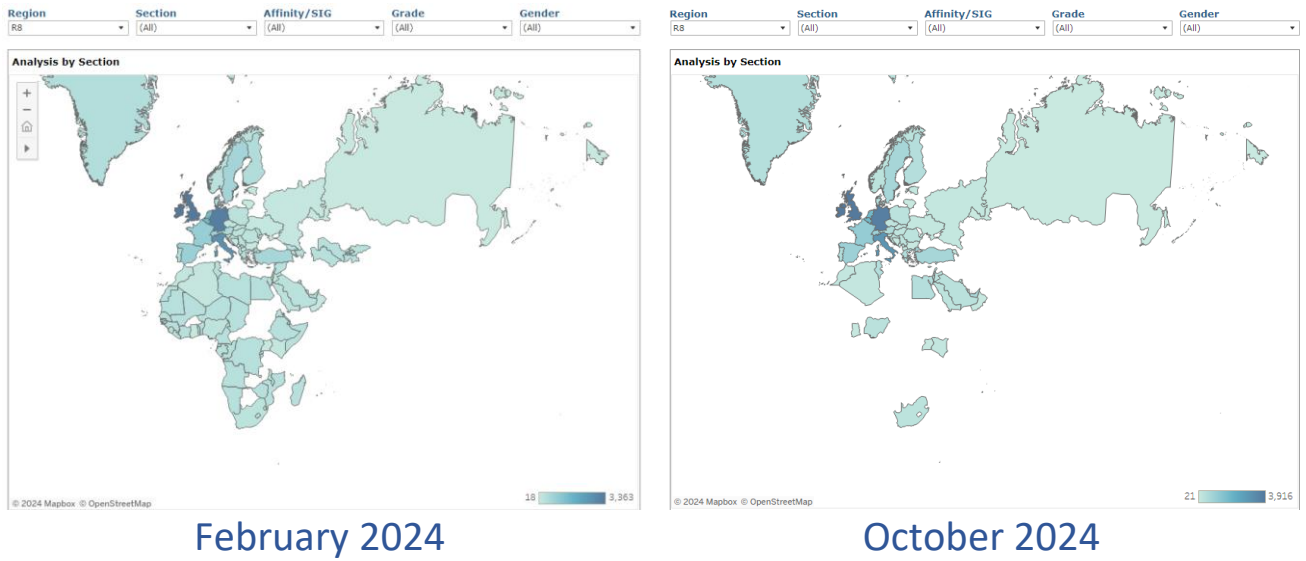


Figure 4- YP membership density map, per Section in Region 8. On the left, in February 2024, just before IEEE system dropping the memberships that were not renewed, and on the right, in October 2024.