



Impact of IEEE conferences for Sections' vitality through the experience of Section Chairs

Sergio Rapuano

Past Chair, IEEE Italy Section



Conference organization at the IEEE Italy Section

<https://italy.ieeer8.org/>

- ▶ Most R8 flagship & portfolio conferences hosted in Italy recently (RTSI 2021 and 2024, Melecon 2022, Eurocon 2023, Histelcon 2023, IHTC 2024)



- ▶ The IEEE Italy Section is financial sponsor/co-sponsor of 11 annual/biannual conferences and workshops
- ▶ It is technical co-sponsor of many other conferences organized by IEEE Societies and no-profit entities outside the IEEE



Involvement of Chapters and Affinity Groups

Coordinating the activities: interdisciplinarity is the key

- ▶ For *financially (co)sponsored* conferences, the Italy Section requires the involvement of the Chapters/AGs interested and in scope with the focus of the event
 - Chapters/AGs involved: Eurocon 2023 (31), RTSI 2024 (17), IHTC 2024 (12)
- ▶ To provide *technical (co)sponsorship*, the Section requires the involvement of *at least two* Chapters/AGs
- ▶ For conferences dedicated to the activity mainly developed by a *single Chapter* (e.g., in collaboration with a Society and other public or no-profit institutions), the Section can provide an *endorsement* on request, without giving the TCS



Involvement of Student Branches

Synergies between SBs, HKN Chapters and student associations

- ▶ The participation in a conference is useful for the students for *widening their knowledge* on the organization and presentation of the research activities
- ▶ Depending on the rules of the single Universities, the students could ask the University a contribution to *register* to a conference (viable for *groups* of students of the same course)
- ▶ The *internal organization* of the IEEE SBs simplifies the contacts with the conference organizers
- ▶ The IEEE SBs and HKN Chapters can assist organizing or participate in dedicated *competitions* at the conference
- ▶ In Italy the students that participate as *volunteers* to the organization of conferences *cannot* receive incentives in terms of *course credits* by universities nor *direct payments*
- ▶ The volunteers can be *rewarded* with free entrance to coffee-breaks, lunches, the conference dinner, and networking opportunities



Conference organization at the IEEE Italy Section

Impact on the Section vitality

- ▶ The *intense activity* carried out for Conference organization has involved many Italian Chapters/AGs and volunteers
- ▶ In addition, the Regional Conferences have attracted *many participants* from different Italian Chapters with the possibility of meeting each other and exchanging ideas
- ▶ Improved the visibility of IEEE in the Country, especially in non-IEEE communities co-organizing the events
- ▶ Strengthened relations
 - ▶ among Chapters/SB Chapters and Societies
 - ▶ among Chapters of different Societies
 - ▶ between members from academia and industry
 - ▶ between members and non-member volunteers



Conference organization at the IEEE Italy Section

Impact on the Section vitality

- ▶ Allows starting or strengthening partnerships with external organizations (Universities, Scientific Sectors, companies, government agencies, etc.)
- ▶ Provides financial support (surplus)
- ▶ Creates opportunities for IEEE members and students to network together and with IEEE leaders, distinguished speakers, stakeholders, etc.
- ▶ Fosters the membership growth (registration discount for members) and attracted non-member volunteers
- ▶ Fosters the creation of new Chapters

Conference organization at the IEEE Italy Section

Impact on the Section vitality

- ▶ The activity for Conferences has been one of the major drivers for keeping *high vitality* of the Section, with excellent results obtained in the last few years:
 - Sustained membership growth (+7% one year 23-22, +16% two years 23-21, +23% three years 23-20): **2023 IEEE Outstanding Member Recruitment Performance Award, 2021 and 2018 Outstanding Section Membership Recruitment and Retention Performance Awards**
 - **2023 IEEE MGA Outstanding Large Section Award**, the highest recognition worldwide of the IEEE for a (Large) Section, given during the *IEEE Section Congress* (Ottawa, Canada, August 2023)
 - **2024 IEEE Region 8 Outstanding Large Section Award**, the highest recognition of the R8 for a (Large) Section, given during the *123rd IEEE Region 8 Committee Meeting* (Bordeaux, France, October 2024)

Challenging aspects

Need for facilitating and clarifying the interactions

- ▶ *Cross-information* between Section and Societies through Chapters should be improved to avoid the IEEE members feeling a “double channel” with the Section and the Society
- ▶ *Lack of coordination* can happen when the Societies organize events and the corresponding Chapters do not involve the Section with sufficient advance (and vice versa)
- ▶ Volunteer involvement is critical: the *participation* of the Chapters/AGs/SBs has to be *effective* and not limited to minor contributions, also when the officers of the OUs that signed the MoU end their terms before the conference





THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

Sergio Rapuano
Past Chair, IEEE Italy Section

rapuano@unisannio.it

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