

Student Branch Congress 2000, Eindhoven - Netherlands

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Introduction

Student Branch (SB) Eindhoven has organized Student Branch Congress 2000 (SBC2000) with a motive "Bringing Branches Together". Also they had its 20th anniversary this year (2000). We received an invitation for the SBC2000 through region 8 SB mailing list. Three representatives of our SB had desire to join the SBC2000: Ales, Bostjan and me (Dejan). The first problem was finances. We started a campaign for sponsors. We send out a lot of sponsorship requests. We got two answers - from Iskratel and Mobitel d.d. Our financial problem was solved.

Traveling 13052000

After a lot of calculation we decided to travel by car. Traveling expenses are smaller and we traveled faster as well. Also Bostjan was so generous that he sacrificed his car. We left Maribor at 0720 (13.05.2000) and arrived in Eindhoven around 1930. We made around 1200 km. In that time we crossed three borders, had one police control, four coffee breaks, switched drivers, nice sleep, etc.

We found our hotel (Royal Hotel) in first try. After all unpacking we went sightseeing to the city center. We went to the Railway station Eindhoven, where Ales was checking out times of arrivals and departures of trains, also he studied maps of the city. Then we checked out where is Technische Universiteit Eindhoven and finally we went to a pub to try out Netherlandish beer. That was the pinnacle of the evening.

Sunday – 14052000

The official schedule had no forseen activities until 1700 so we decided to go to Amsterdam. We arrived there at 1000. We wanted to see all the interesting things we've heard so much about: coffee-shops, the famous Red light district (lots of »generous girls« ☺); characteristics of Amsterdam buildings (they are very sunk), lots of pantomimists and the most popular vehicles – bikes. We were surprised over the security of bikes because each of them was locked with at least two locks. The Amsterdam railway station has more security than our prisons.

In the center we saw a little boat with Tomos engine (Tomos is a Slovene producer of boat engines). However, Amsterdam was a beautiful experience. I want to see it again but at night because then it probably shows its real magic. At 1700 we returned to Eindhoven because the official part of our visit at Technische Universiteit Eindhoven began. It started by acquaintance over coffee, later on we also had a snack. During the snack we were greeted by our hosts (Mathijs Visser, IEEE Student Branch Eindhoven Chair) and some higher representatives of IEEE association (Dr. Rolf A. Remshardt, 1999-2000 IEEE Region 8 Director). On this occasion the Eindhoven Student Branch of IEEE received a memorial plaque and a check for 500 \$. At 2100 we gathered at Eindhoven railway station and had a beer in a pub. This was our first hanging out together with the most Congress attendents where we got to know eachother better.

15052000 – Monday

The next two days were very exhausting. We spent all days at the Technische Universiteit Eindhoven because the two day Leadership Training Program started. The Congress was opened by dr. Gozde Bozdagi (2000 IEEE RAB Vice Chair, Student Activities) and dr. Martin J. Bastiaans (IEEE Student Branch Eindhoven Counselor). The Congress Committee presented the whole week program. After that we started with the IEEE guests lectures. At 1230 we had lunch (yammi, yammi) that gave us energy for collecting new knowledges and experiences from older and more experienced.

After lunch we continued the program. I was the most thrilled over thoughtful work in groups: all attendants presented some of the biggest problems of a particular branch and put them in eight different groups. Then the leader for each group was selected. Attendants were allowed to join a group according to the problem each individual found interesting. I went to the group which discussed the legal problem of student branches. Here you can get our group report.

And now – dinner that we've all been waiting for. It was delicious! During the meals we were able to chat with other congress attendants but most of all we were able to learn about foreign habits and cultures.

After dinner (around 2000) group representatives introduced the problematic issues again but in a wider perspective and their solution. At this point I invite all other groups to send me your notes to put them on the website. At 2200 we ended the discussion and returned to the hotel totally exhausted.

16062000 – Tuesday

The 2nd day of Leadership Training Program started. Some of the guests described students activities in region 8 in details. The first presenter was William Watte (IEEE R8 GOLD Representative) – he gave us the explanation of the IEEE GOLD activities, then Kurt Richter (IEEE R8 Vice Chair, Technical Activities) with Educational programmes; Javier Macias Guarasa (IEEE R8 Student Activities Chair) and Jorge-Luis Sanchez-Ponz (IEEE R8 Student Representative) told us all about R8 specific activities and dr. Gozde Bozdagi explained us the General R8 structure and R8 SAC Committee. The next three guests talked about the theme: Contests and acquiring funds available – dr. Gozde Bozdagi, Javier Macias Guarasa and dr. Martin J. Bastiaans. Jens Hannemann (IEEE R8 Student Branch Newsletter Editor) and Christian Borgert (IEEE R8 Electronic Communications Coordinator) showed us (theoretically) the connection to the Undernet and the usage of it. Few of us knew that the IEEE members communicate over the #ieee channel and undernet server. The usage is explained here. Before lunch Christian Borgert showed us how to use IEEE websites and asked us to apply for links on individual students branch site. Next – lunch.

After lunch – presentation of student branches and countries. Our student branch was presented by Bostjan and me (Dejan). You can find all about our student branch on our home page. Next – intercultural exhibition, where we were able to see and »taste« the difference between countries – from our white and red wine to mexican tequila and typical mexican food. All attendants were able to taste our national food »potica«. We also gave others some materials from our sponsors, presented the University of Maribor and our heterogeneous country. You can see the photos for a better perspective of the whole thing. I believe that all attendants think the exhibition was too short because when we really started to enjoy it we had to return to lectures.

After dinner we had two evening programmes: eggdrop contest and rowing. I applied for eggdrop contest because I wanted to see the whole thing from a practical point of view. You can see the results on the site, and the photos.

All I can say about the whole thing is that we are very interested and we are planning to organize the eggdrop contest on our student branch in November; you are all very welcome, of course.

With a toast to the winner we ended the evening and went to the hotel – well, actually to the pub.

17052000 – Wednesday

At 0930 we were picked up by a bus that took us to the University, where we were divided into three different groups: A, B and C. We all got bags in which there was a paper with destination. It was random and also more interesting. I got a »Philips ticket«. Other two were: a Campus tour Technische Universiteit Eindhoven and Company visit to ASML.

In a nice environment of Philips we first saw a very interesting Demo center. We started with the most clumsy x-ray machines and ended at the most perfective CT apparatus. Science is so advanced that we can see the face of our unborn child by ultrasound. Next – the research center, where we were not

allowed to take photos. Before we went inside we had to leave all electronic devices in lockers because of the high magnetic field. In one of the boxes we saw a power of a magnet over a tennis ball, filled with iron wires. It is amazing, what power does a magnetic field actually have. Next – snack; but we were a bit disappointed because we had to pay for it. After short negotiations the administration of SB Eindhoven decided that this snack was included in our expenses that is for those who have not eaten yet. Next – lectures were given by several Phillips representatives. Lectures were long, the seats comfortable, participants tired ... but that does not mean, that the lectures were boring. On the contrary, we were able to learn a lot about future technology and the solutions already used on the Philips products. Before we left we were able to see the environment around the center of Philips. I was surprised how natural it actually looks. There were even rabbits on the lawn for which is taken care of by the employees. So, if some of the workers wants some fresh air, he steps outside and there you go – he is already in the »nature«.

Now maybe just a short comment on the bus ride from Phillips to Exhibition Center Eindhoven »Jaarbeurs«. Smoking in public places is in Slovenia prohibited. You can imagine how surprised i was when the busdriver started to roll a cigarette and then smoking during the ride. We had dinner at Exhibition Center Eindhoven »Jaarbeurs«. After a nice meal we were able to see how the companies in the Netherlands search new employees among students. In Slovenia there is a lot unemployed engineers not to mention the generally unemployment. Before sleep we went to different pubs.

18052000 – Friday

According to the schedule we had an interesting day in front of us: tour of the city Maastricht on a »step« (motorless scooter). I'm not a foreigner with how to drive a bike but some attendents obviously were. So we saw a few soft falls. We were forced to make a short tour because the weather was so Netherlandish – to rain or not to rain. In a bar we drank tee and had a desert. Next – snack provided by the hosts. Then we went by foot to the caves. During the II. world war these caves were digged by the Maastricht inhabitants (by bare hands or smaller tools) so they could hide when the Germans attacked. On the ceilings we could see the direction of digging. See the photos for a close map of the caves. Next – by foot back to Maastricht railway station and then to Eindhoven. At 1800 closing party – barbecue. We learned a lot about student night life – it remembered me a lot of Stuk in Slovenia, Maribor. There was some material left from intercultural exhibition, for example Russians had some vodka left. Later on we moved to the Dembos and partied on.

20052000 – Sunday

The official part of the programm ended. We went to Brussels on our own. The Atomium, Mini Europe, driving with the Metro (a unique, first time experiance for me), tour of the Brussels University and the city centre. Atomium dissapointed me a little bit because it is quite old-fashioned. I believe it was fantastic in the time of the opening. I was thrilled over the University because of the natural environment – a great way for a student to escape from science for a while. We even met a Slovene student, girl, she is participating in Erasmus – exchanged students programm. In the city centre we saw some world wide known tourist sites:....

We were back at the hotel at 2200 – next day we had a long, long way home.

We arrived at Slovenia at 1900 – home sweet home.