

## IEEE ComSoc CONFERENCES

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With publications, conferences are one of the key pillars of the IEEE Communications Society. Undoubtedly, the technical excellence and reputation of ComSoc conferences and publications are the main reason for which our members enroll and form our ComSoc community.

In particular, conferences play a very important role in achieving ComSoc's goals to serve our wider community, by presenting top-notch scientific and technical content, showcasing the latest technologies, and providing ample networking opportunities for all attendees. ComSoc conferences are an extraordinary opportunity to meet and network with the best researchers and experts in our area. Also, financially, conferences alone constitute more than half of the whole ComSoc annual budget and sustain ComSoc activities, which are run to serve members.

Our conferences are successful because of the dedication of many volunteers, who contribute a significant amount of their time to guarantee this success without any reward other than the personal gratification of serving the community, and because of the high professionalism and experience of ComSoc staff, who are really the engine running behind the scenes of conferences, ensuring that all mechanisms work as expected in coordination with volunteers.

Not surprisingly, a recent ComSoc member survey reported that one of the contents, which is considered most interesting and potentially useful by *IEEE Communications Magazine* readers, would be highlights of technical advances presented at our conferences, as well as general reports on our main events. Therefore, the Editor-in-Chief Antonio Sanchez-Esguevillas, in agreement with the Vice President — Publications Chengshan Xiao and Director of Magazines Nei Kato, has invited me to start and be the Editor of this column on ComSoc Conferences in *IEEE Communications Magazine*.

Presently, on the IEEE ComSoc Board of Governors I am serving as the Director of Conferences Operations. For the past four years (2018–2021), I served as Vice President — Conferences. Besides that, I have spent most of my life as a volunteer in ComSoc serving on Conference Committees with various responsibilities, technical and not. Based on that, everyone will understand my enthusiasm when I was proposed to start this column. I have been simply delighted to accept.

## THE COMSOC CONFERENCE PORTFOLIO

Since 2011, IEEE ComSoc has adopted a management strategy for its financially sponsored technical conferences and workshops, based on the definition of a *Portfolio* of technical events. In particular, ComSoc Portfolio Conferences (or more broadly speaking, *technical events*) are defined as all those events that are financially sponsored, fully or in part, by ComSoc. This strategy was defined during the 2010–2011 term, when Khaled B. Letaief was Vice-President — Conferences.

After a process of revision and consolidation started in 2018, ComSoc Portfolio Conferences are now classified in the following six categories.

- *Flagship Conferences* are large events, attended by thousands of people, with extensive coverage of the ComSoc technical scope and involvement of nearly all ComSoc Technical Committees (TCs). ComSoc has two flagships: the IEEE International Conference on Communications (ICC) and the IEEE Global Communications Conference (GLOBECOM). Twice a year, ICC and GLOBECOM gather the broadest representation of ComSoc communities

and host all the main ComSoc Boards and Committee meetings, including the ComSoc Board of Governors.

- *Core Conferences* are medium/large events, but with significant international attendance and narrower scope centered on a specific subset of ComSoc's technical areas. Among the largest core conferences, we may mention the IEEE Consumer Communications & Networking Conference (CCNC), the IEEE International Conference on Computer Communications (INFOCOM), the IEEE/IFIP Network Operations and Management Symposium (NOMS), and the IEEE Wireless Communications and Networking Conference (WCNC).
- *Other Conferences and Workshops*, which are smaller events, normally attended by up to 100–200 persons, are typically driven by a single Technical Committee and therefore are focused on a specific narrow technical scope. Such ComSoc conferences and workshops have quite a good reputation in their respective fields. This category currently includes about a dozen conferences.
- *Regional Conferences* always occur in a specific ComSoc Region, drawing involvement from the local IEEE Sections, ComSoc Chapters, and Sister Societies. Their main objective is to reach out to all countries while paying extra attention to disadvantaged areas, and ultimately to drive membership development. The group of ComSoc Regional Conferences currently consists of the IEEE Latin American Conference on Communications (LATINCOM), the IEEE International Mediterranean Conference on Communications and Networking (MEDITCOM), the IEEE International Black Sea Conference on Communications and Networking (BLACKSEACOM), and the IEEE International Conference on Advanced Networks and Telecommunications Systems (ANTS) in India.
- *Financially Co-Sponsored Conferences*, including, for example, the IEEE Optical Networking and Communication Conference (OFC), the European Conference on Networks and Communications (EuCNC), and the IEEE International Symposium on Personal, Indoor and Mobile Radio Communications (PIMRC).
- *Other Events*, which are the most heterogeneous category in the Portfolio, grouping all those events aimed at industry and professionals, also based on invited contributions without following our traditional model of conference (e.g., peer review), including events of IEEE Initiatives.

The full list of ComSoc Portfolio Conferences and Workshops is posted on the ComSoc website (<https://www.comsoc.org/conferences-events/portfolio-conferences-events>).

## WHAT WILL THIS COLUMN BE ABOUT?

We aim at sharing periodically not only highlights of striking advances in information and communication technology presented at our most important conferences, but also the feeling of those who organize and attend them, by reporting main events and programs.

Our plan is to post articles not only in *IEEE Communications Magazine* in this column, but also in the *Global Communications Newsletter* (GCN), which appears monthly within the IEEE magazine and as a standalone online publication (<https://www.comsoc.org/publications/magazines/ieee-communications-magazine/gcn>). More specifically, we will solicit two reports from each major ComSoc Conference, to be posted in the magazine and GCN as follows.

- In *IEEE Communications Magazine*, in this column, a report of the most interesting, striking technical advances presented at our conferences, ideally prepared by the Technical Program Co-Chairs. This report is solicited to be not just a bare summary of the technical program, but should ideally sketch highlights of those technical and scientific contents that will mostly likely be remembered by the attendees of the conference.
  - In the *Global Communications Newsletter*, an article oriented to present organization highlights, prepared by the General Chair, Executive Chair, or Local Operations Chair. This article may present, for instance, highlights on the general program, the venue, the social events, any collocated events, the exhibit, and more.
- It comes naturally to admit that we do not know yet if we will succeed in collecting such detailed articles for all ComSoc conferences. However, all we and staff will strive to achieve the

ambitious goal: we call for contributions from all conference Organizing Committees. Stay tuned and read us!

### BIOGRAPHY

STEFANO BREGNI (stefano.bregni@polimi.it) is with Politecnico di Milano, Italy. He graduated in electronics engineering (1990). After nine years in industry, he joined Politecnico in 1999. He contributed to ETSI/ITU-T standards and is the author of 100+ papers and of a widely recognized book on network synchronization (Wiley, 2002). He is an active IEEE volunteer and has been a voting member of the IEEE Conferences Committee. In ComSoc, he served as Vice-President Conferences (2018–2019, 2020–2021), Vice-President MGA (2014–2015, 2016–2017), Member-at-Large of the Board of Governors (2010–2013), Director of Education (2008–2011), Chair of the TAOS TC (2008–2009), and Distinguished Lecturer (2003–2009). He is Editor-in-Chief of the *Global Communications Newsletter*. He has led or is leading several top ComSoc conferences, including: Technical Program Co-Chair or Vice-Chair of GLOBECOM 2023, ICC 2016, GLOBECOM 2012, and GLOBECOM 2009; Symposium Co-Chair in nine other ICC/GLOBECOMs; and Chair of the LATINCOM Steering Committee. He received the 2014 IEEE ComSoc Hal Sobol Award for Exemplary Service to Meetings & Conferences and the 2019 IEEE ComSoc/KICS Exemplary Global Service Award.