

In memoriam

Professor Emeritus Dragutin Taboršak

(12th June 1925 – 20th December 2018)



It is with deep sorrow that we have to announce that our dear colleague, Professor Emeritus Dragutin Taboršak, a member of the Department of Industrial Engineering at the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering and Naval Architecture, University of Zagreb, as well as an honorary member of the Croatian Ergonomics Society, passed away peacefully. He left behind many close friends and colleagues. His death touched us deeply and made us very sad.

Professor Emeritus Dragutin Taboršak was a mentor, teacher and colleague who showed his enthusiasm, personality and freshness in his work. He inspired his students by giving them selflessly his knowledge, experience and his time, working with them both in the classroom and in the laboratory.

Dragutin Taboršak was born in Sunja. As a teenage boy he came to Zagreb for high school education, which he completed in 1944. His beginnings in the technical profession were in his father's locksmith workshop where he worked while simultaneously studying at the Technical Faculty of the University of Zagreb. He completed his studies in 1950 and started his career in industry, first in the company "Rade Končar" and afterwards in the companies "ZET" and "Radnik". While working in those companies he was dealing with work organization and production management. The experience gained in those companies taught him that there were a lot of issues to be examined in that field.

Thus, he took a job with the High Technical School and returned to his studies to do a doctoral thesis and more research in the field of work organization. He was awarded his PhD degree and became an assistant professor at the High Technical School of the University of Zagreb in 1962, and soon after, he was appointed to the rank of Associate Professor. In the period from 1966 to 1968 Professor Taboršak was the Dean of the High Technical School, and when that school became part of the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering and Naval Architecture in 1968, he continued to be the Dean in the period from 1968 to 1970. During his academic career, he participated in numerous activities of the Faculty and the University as well as of various councils. It should be pointed out that Professor Taboršak developed new fields of research and introduced ergonomics as a new scientific field in Croatia when he was the head of the Committee for doctoral studies.

During his doctoral studies, Professor Taboršak spent eight months in Paris in the companies "Bureau des Temps Elementaires" and "Renault" as well as 3 months in Darmstadt in the company "REFA". In those periods, he had an opportunity to learn about work ergonomics and bring that knowledge to Croatia, applying it in his lectures.

The knowledge and experience gained abroad and in industry made him realize that ergonomics needed to be applied to a greater extent in Croatia. Therefore, on 20 May 1974, he established the Croatian Society of Ergonomics in Zagreb and became the first president of the society. Later, the society changed its name to the Croatian Ergonomics Society (CrES). In accordance with the mission and vision of the founder of the society, CrES has taken care of scientific, professional and educational fields of ergonomics in the Republic of Croatia and has promoted cooperation with the business community. Since its establishment, CrES has

been interconnected with relevant societies and organizations in the field of ergonomics worldwide.

The main scientific interests of Professor Taboršak were work studies, ergonomics and production organisation, about which he published many scientific and professional papers and also held many seminars for interested parties in industry. He applied the knowledge of this field to his teaching. He established the Laboratory for Work Studies, first-ever of its kind in Croatia, and he also published the book *Work Studies* that had four editions. That book provided the foundations of the field of ergonomics in Croatia and it is still in use today.

As a distinguished professor, Dragutin Taboršak was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Reward in 1992 by the Republic of Croatia. This award was granted in recognition of his contribution to developing new research areas and to science and teaching; in addition, his mentoring activities and participation in numerous scientific and industrial projects solving real problems in production were also recognized.

There is so much that can be said about the rich history of the activities of Professor Taboršak, but we are going to remember Professor Taboršak most for his optimistic character, creativity in his work and devotion to his Faculty and to his homeland, Croatia. With the death of Professor Emeritus Dragutin Taboršak, the professional and scientific community lost a prominent member, extraordinary expert in the field of work study and ergonomics, a dear colleague and a friend who will be remembered by generations of students, colleagues and friends who had worked with him.

May he rest in peace!

Zagreb, 6 January 2019

Faculty of Mechanical Engineering and Naval Architecture