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Institut građevinarstva Hrvatske
The Civil Engineering Institute of Croatia

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The Institute was founded in 1949 under the name of the Civil Engineering Laboratory - Zagreb, with the principle objective of providing extensive infrastructure support to the construction industry, in maintaining and improving the quality of construction activities. Six years later, it gained the status of a research and development institution. In order to meet the growing demand of the construction industry, in the period of 1961-1973, the Institute opened regional units and permanent field laboratories in the major Croatian towns. In 1977, the Institute merged with the Faculty of Civil Engineering, University of Zagreb to form a single entity called the Civil Engineering Institute. But in 1991, the separation of the Institute and the Faculty was required by a new law and the Institute became fully independent. Today, it is one of the leading national research and development institutions, successfully combining fifty years of experience, the availability of modern equipment and a professional approach to every task. The various undertakings of the Institute have been successfully performed equally in Croatia and around the world, in numerous European and African countries, the Middle East, China, and Malaysia. The Institute performs research and professional activities through seven departments and three regional units:

The Department for Concrete and Masonry Structures

The Geotechnical Department

The Water Management Department

The Department for Steel Structures

The Construction Management Department

The Transportation Department

The Building Design Department

The Regional Unit in Split

The Regional Unit in Osijek

The Regional Unit in Rijeka

It has more than 700 full-time employees, more than half of that number professionals with PhD, master's and bachelor's degrees in civil engineering and other disciplines.

Education for the Information Society

On the Croatian scene, in education nearly everyone is a policy expert. However, times and circumstances have changed. The market has become real, its discipline is exacting, and its ability to reward those who supply its needs is now easily apparent. We asked ourselves: what course of action should those who direct the levers of society consider in the adaptation of education to change? How should the tools of regulation, quality assurance and resource allocation be applied to ensure that Croatian education, from pre-school to university, fulfills broad public purposes, serves the particular aspirations of individuals, and supports the aspirations of the various institutions?

We acknowledge that there is a definite link between students' engineering and scientific achievements, their future employment opportunities and their quality of life, as well as the nation's economic growth. But in recent years, it is no secret that mathematics, science and engineering have become less popular studies in the Croatian society. We have recognized that policy-makers do not realize that the ability to apply mathematics, science and engineering skills really empowers individuals to make informed decisions as citizens, employers and consumers.

The advent and strengthening of the Information Society in the European Union has influenced various aspects of our life and motivated the Academy to study the possible impacts on professions in the future, particularly on the future of engineers. A new multidisciplinary programme, *Education for Information Society*, was conceived.

The basic goal:

To contribute to the viability of the Croatian society by the motivation of re-engineering and revitalising the processes of the educational systems and by creating the climate for a continuous increase in the education and intellectual potential of citizens.

To help to prepare citizens for new methods of communication and business, in order to more efficiently act in the changing economic and social environment, through understanding and adaptation to change, occurring in the Information Society.

In November, 1997, the **First Colloquium "Do we cognite the changes?"** was a valuable beginning to our project.

The **Second Colloquium, "Multimedia, distance learning and teaching"**, held in May 1998, was a review of research results in the application of new technologies. Particular attention was given to the use of intelligent tutoring systems in distance learning.

The **Third Colloquium, "Cognition, knowledge and reasoning"**, will be held in October 1998. It was planned to motivate discussion on the present needs and on possible processes of change and the understanding such change, particularly the development of knowledge economy.

The **Fourth Colloquium "Engineer of the Future"** will be held in February 1999 and will be a particularly interesting gathering hosted in co-operation with engineering Faculties from Croatia.

The Dialogue with Doctors

The scientific conference, *Telemedicine in Croatia*, is our very first joint venture with the Croatian Academy of Medical Sciences. It will take place in Zagreb, in November, and has been partly organized as a traditional conference, and partly as a teleconference in which participants from Split and Osijek will be able to join in.

In 1999 two joint forums, under the title, *Communication and Cooperation of Physicians and Engineers*, are planned. The subject of the First Forum will be *Biomedicine and Biotechnology*, and *Teamwork* will be the subject of the Second Forum.

Our engineers have been supporting physicians in their work more than three decades in various fields of medicine, and in selected fields they have jointly reached worldwide recognition. Unfortunately, culture of teamwork is not developed enough in medicine.