

Report of the Intersteno 2015 Congress

The International Federation for Information and Communication Processing INTERSTENO organized its 50th Congress from July 18 to July 24, in Budapest, Hungary. The event was attended by almost 600 participants coming from 35 countries.

7 World Championships took place, with the participation of competitors from all around the world.

- Text Production: Wim Gerbecks (Netherlands) copied a written text at the speed of 758,9 characters per minute for 30 minutes with 0,097% mistakes, using a chord keyboard.
- Text Correction: Petr Hais (Czech Republic) managed to introduce 220 text corrections in 10 minutes with only 2 mistakes;
- Word Processing: Petr Hais (Czech Republic) was awarded the gold medal with a 98% accuracy;
- Audio Transcription: Gioia Pedretti (Italy) is the World champion as she transcribed 6496 characters in 10 minutes with 0.031% mistakes;
- Speech Capturing: Laura Brewer (USA) won the title capturing the highest speed;
- Real-Time Speech Capturing: John Wissenbach (USA) was awarded the first rank as he captured the highest speed with the best accuracy without editing the text (260 syllables in 8 minutes with 1 mistake);
- Note Taking and Summary Report: Lukáš Beránek (Czech Republic) won the title summarizing a speech with 95% accuracy.

Conferences, seminars, and meetings on professional matters as well as an exhibition of latest software and technological devices for professionals were hosted at the Corvinus University, main venue of the Congress.

The Intersteno Parliamentary and other professional Reporters' Section (IPRS) organized two meetings, followed by a visit to the Hungarian Parliament. The core topic was the new means of communication used to inform citizenship about parliamentary activities, such as mobile applications, Tweets directly by the Parliament to inform about ongoing parliamentary sessions, short web reports to meet the needs of rapid communication, and live and on-demand broadcasting of parliamentary sessions in order to fulfill the need for a full access. Other cutting-edge professional aspects included how live streams influence the reports and debates, differences and similarities in reporting due to political and cultural reasons, and new ICT systems for managing parliamentary documents.

The Scientific Committee reviewed the action for having Shorthand recognized as UNESCO masterpiece, the INTERSTENO digital library, and the studies for integrating non-alphabetical languages in INTERSTENO competitions. An "Intersteno Set of professional Competencies", as a basis for a certification program, was presented and approved by the Council.

The main conference focused on the tools for rapidly disseminating communication, overcoming the distinction between spoken and written language. The core of presentations was live production of texts by means of speech-to-text technology, particularly for deaf and hard-of-hearing people, non-native speakers and people living or working in noisy environments. Speakers investigated also the present state of typing education in Hungary; the implementation of the Japanese language in Intersteno competitions; quality of real-time texts; web reporting; and online parliaments as a future scenario for reporters.

Among the exhibitors, Korea Steno Co., a South Korean reporting and captioning company, presented new keyboards and related technologies to enhance the information and communication processing experience. Stenograph, an American shorthand machine company, presented the most advanced versions and the main tools for court reporting as well as programs for online continuing education, and other industry-related supplies. Velotype presented the latest release of Text-on-Top, a software for providing CART (Communication Access Realtime Translation) and supported the opening ceremony, the IPRS meetings, and the main conferences with live subtitling (available even in foreign languages via Google Translate).

As in all Congresses, a special “Youth Event” offered the younger participants the possibility of melding their experiences and their different cultures in a day of fun and contacts at the Lázár Equestrian Park.

The General Assembly of Intersteno took important decisions presented by the Council and by the Board for the future of the Federation. After passing the budget for next two years, it voted some modifications to the Statute in order to simplify and govern individual and associated memberships.

The newly elected Board members are: Fausto Ramondelli (President), Rian Schwarz (vice President), Danny Devriendt (Secretary Treasurer), Keliang Tang (member), Russell Page (member), Georgette Sante (Jury Leader), Carlo Eugeni (Scientific Committee chairman). Gian Paolo Trivulzio, Linda Drake, and Emrah Kuyumcu are confirmed as consultants of the Board.

The next Council and IPRS meeting will be held in Zagreb (Croatia) in Autumn 2016.

The next 51st Intersteno Congress will be held in Berlin (Germany) in July 2017.