

EPE 2001, Graz, Austria

9th European Conference on Power Electronics and Applications



European Power Electronics Without Borders Between East and West

As an original European conference, the EPE venue has taken place in European towns starting with the capital of unified Europe, Brussels. Grenoble, Aachen, Florence, Brighton, Sevilla, Trondheim and Lausanne hosted the next conferences. On a European map, connecting these towns looks like a zigzag route all over Europe including the south, west and north. And what about the east?

For a high number of centuries Europe kept a tradition of separating countries and people by erecting borders, and it appears that it has been some separation of minds, too. Consider the geographical situation of Graz in the southeast of Austria: less than 100 km distance to the former "iron curtain", a border which split up Europe into an eastern and a western part. Starting about two decades ago, the trench was going to be reduced, and for a decade, big steps are accomplished towards a unification of Europe which does not end at the former "iron curtain". In a procedure of unifying hearts and minds the scientists always acted as fore-runners due to common research aims which were not blocked by borders. Every EPE conference is a great chance to acquire knowledge over the people and the country in that specific part of Europe and personally meet a great community of scientists, engineers, businessmen devoted to power engineering. Personal - and not virtual - meetings give a far better chance of understanding and establishing person-based connections and relations. The EPE 2001 conference shall be a next step after the EPE-PEMC 2000 in Slovakia.

Graz will host the 9th European Conference on Power Electronics and Applications. Out of all previous EPE conference locations, Graz is situated farthest to the east. It is accessible by an international airport, but it can be reached by car or train especially from the nearby Eastern-Europe countries, too. Therefore we hope to attract much more attendees from these countries than before.

The history of Graz goes back some 900 years, it has been a residential town and still is with the provincial government of Styria. The symbol of the city, the Clock Tower, situated on the Schlossberg, a green hill at the center of the town, will be the symbol of EPE 2001 conference, too. Graz, although being the second-largest town of Austria with 280 000 citizens, kept its provincial and charming atmosphere. The Old Town of Graz is one of the best preserved in Central Europe, fortunately not destroyed in war or thereafter by concrete-based high modern buildings. In the city centre, a Mediterranean feeling is raised by the Renaissance buildings, e.g. the Landhaus. A sight of high international reputation is the Provincial Armoury, the world's largest collection of historical arms and body armour - mainly originating from the times 400 years ago. For more than 400 years Graz has been an university city, now including the Technical University and the University of Music and Drama. The nearby countryside offers splendid possibilities for vacation and recreation, e.g. at mountain tours, at natural warm water resorts or in the Wine-land.

The conference will take place in the Grazer Congress, a building adjacent to the Town Hall and the Landhaus, in the very centre of the town. It is an original old building refurbished inside for concerts and congresses, keeping original old ornaments, especially in the main staircase, the Stefanie Hall and the Chamber Music Hall, offering a very pleasant sight. The major town centre hotels are in foot walking distance from the Grazer Congress.

We will give our best to organize EPE 2001 in Graz - beyond the scientific aspects of the conference - as a charming and pleasant meeting place for making friends all over Europe and confirm our friendship and cooperation. I am looking forward to seeing you at the EPE 2001 conference in Graz, and I shall hope you will enjoy the conference and the country encouraging you to stay some time longer.

Helmut Weiss

Helmut Weiss
EPE 2001 Chairman