



Students of Law and E-Democracy: Are They Information Literate at All?

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E-democracy and e-government

- e-democracy
 - meeting of information technology (IT) and democracy
- e-government
 - part of e-democracy
 - the efficient delivery of government/state information to citizens

E-democracy in Croatia

- right to the access to information
 - regulated by the Constitution and Access to Information Act
- e-democracy and e-government
 - underused but positive trends (*E-Citizens portal since May 2014!* <https://www.gov.hr/#e-gradjani>)
- research from 2011 (Digital Information-documentation Agency of the Croatian Government - HIDRA)
 - local admin. websites offer useful information, but poorly organized
 - no online discussion forums with citizens

J. J. Strossmayer University

– 17 members:

- 11 faculties
- 5 departments
- 1 academy



University of Osijek

Faculties

- the Faculty of Economics
- the Faculty of Electrical Engineering
- the Faculty of Civil Engineering
- the Faculty of Education
- the Faculty of Agriculture
- the Faculty of Law**
- the Faculty of Food Technology
- the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering in Slavonski Brod
- the Faculty of Medicine
- the Faculty of Philosophy
- the Catholic Faculty of Theology in Djakovo

Departments

- Department of Mathematics
- Department of Physics
- Department of Chemistry
- Department of Biology
- Department of Cultural Studies

Academy of Arts

Students of law, e-democracy and IL

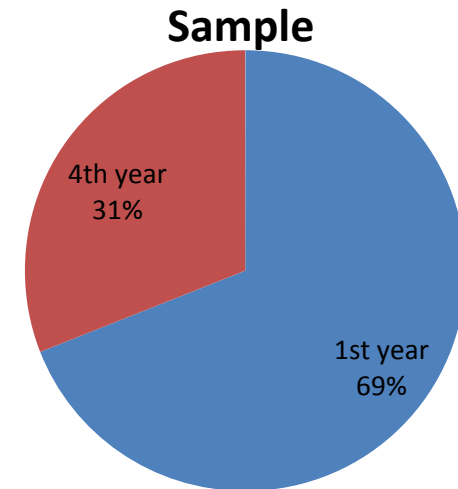
- small-scale pilot-study conducted among students of law at Osijek University on e-government and e-democracy information, but also on media literacy
- students of law
 - identified as those who are professionally directed to such information and have to be able to find, evaluate and apply it

Instrument, methodology and sample

- May 2014
- paper survey
 - media literacy
 - e-democracy

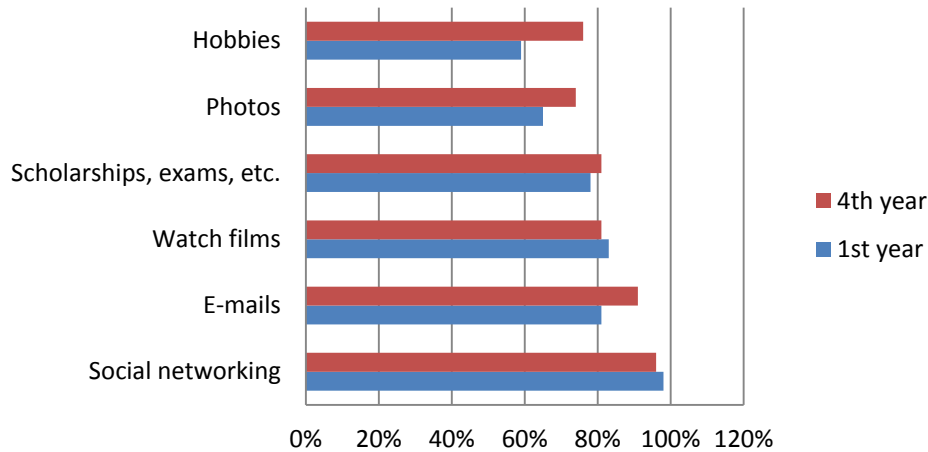
- 171 law students

- survey reached 59% of the 1st year population and 64% of the 4th year population enrolled in academic year 2013/2014

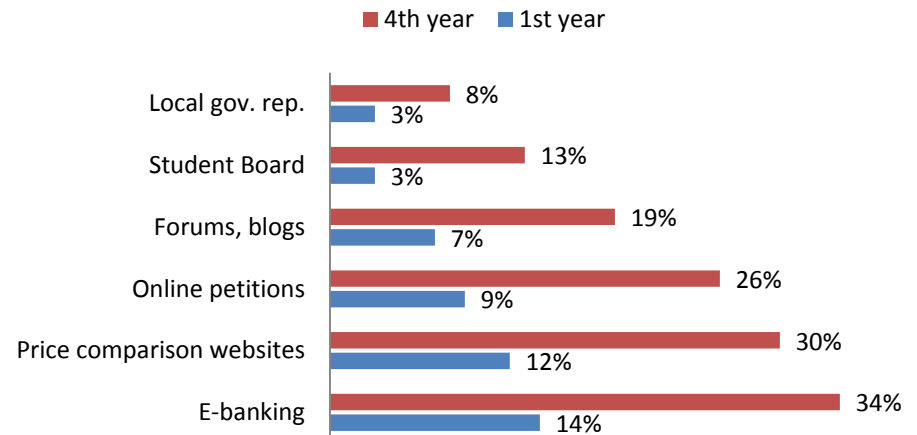


Online activities in the sample

6 most represented activities



6 least represented activities

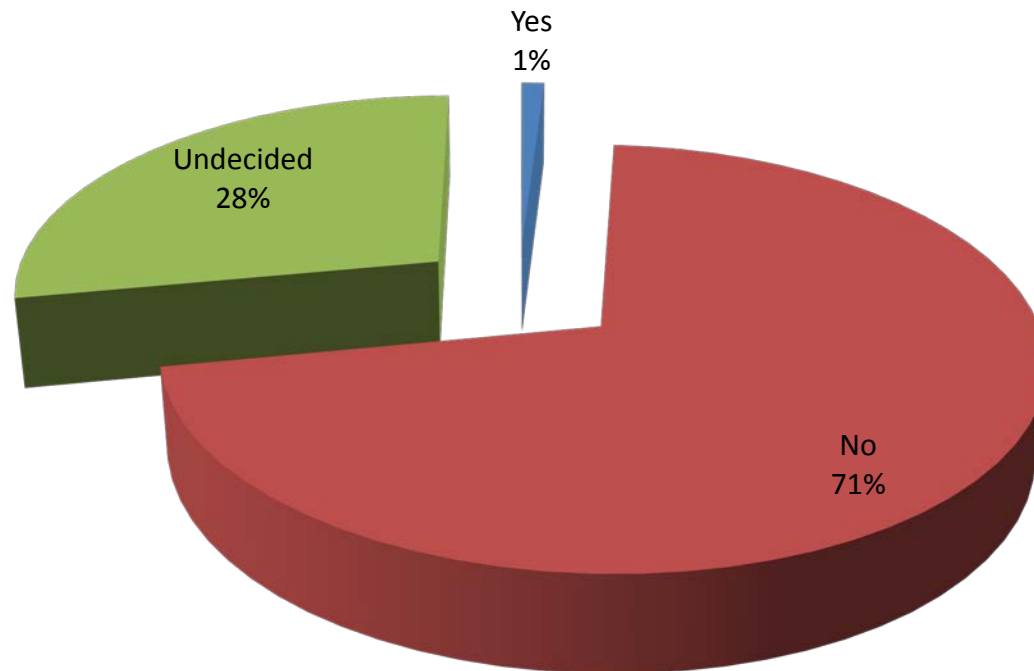


Active participation in e-democracy activities at various levels

Activity	National level N (%)		Regional level N (%)		Local level N (%)		Legal entity with public jurisdiction N (%)		No activity N (%)	
	1 st year	4 th year	1 st year	4 th year	1 st year	4 th year	1 st year	4 th year	1 st year	4 th year
Exercise of democratic rights in decision-making processes (issues of public interest)	8 (6.8)	5 (9.4)	5 (4.2)	2 (3.8)	8 (6.8)	5 (9.4)	13 (11.0)	14 (26.4)	94 (79.7)	37 (69.8)
Public policy modification	5 (4.3)	-	3 (2.6)	-	6 (5.1)	6 (11.3)	1 (0.9)	2 (3.8)	108 (92.3)	47 (88.7)
E-consultation	1 (0.8)	-	2 (1.7)	-	5 (4.2)	1 (1.9)	2 (1.7)	1 (1.9)	111 (94.1)	51 (96.2)

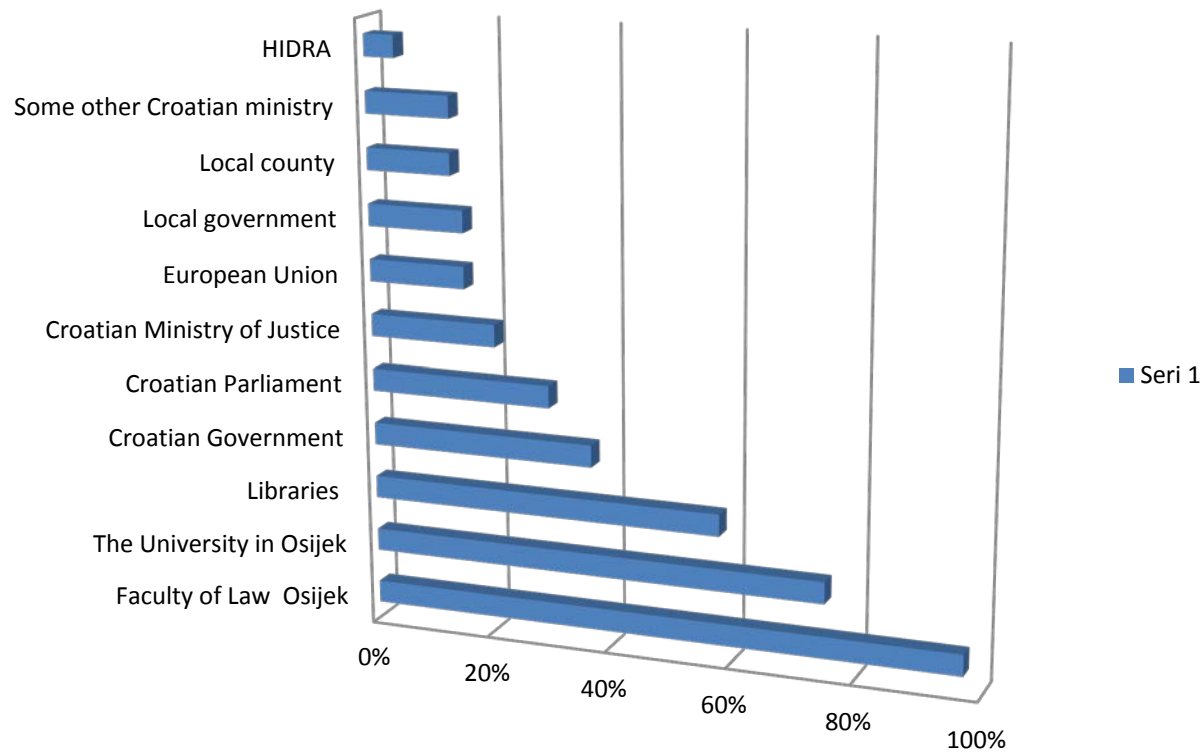
Influence on work of public servants

Perception of influence

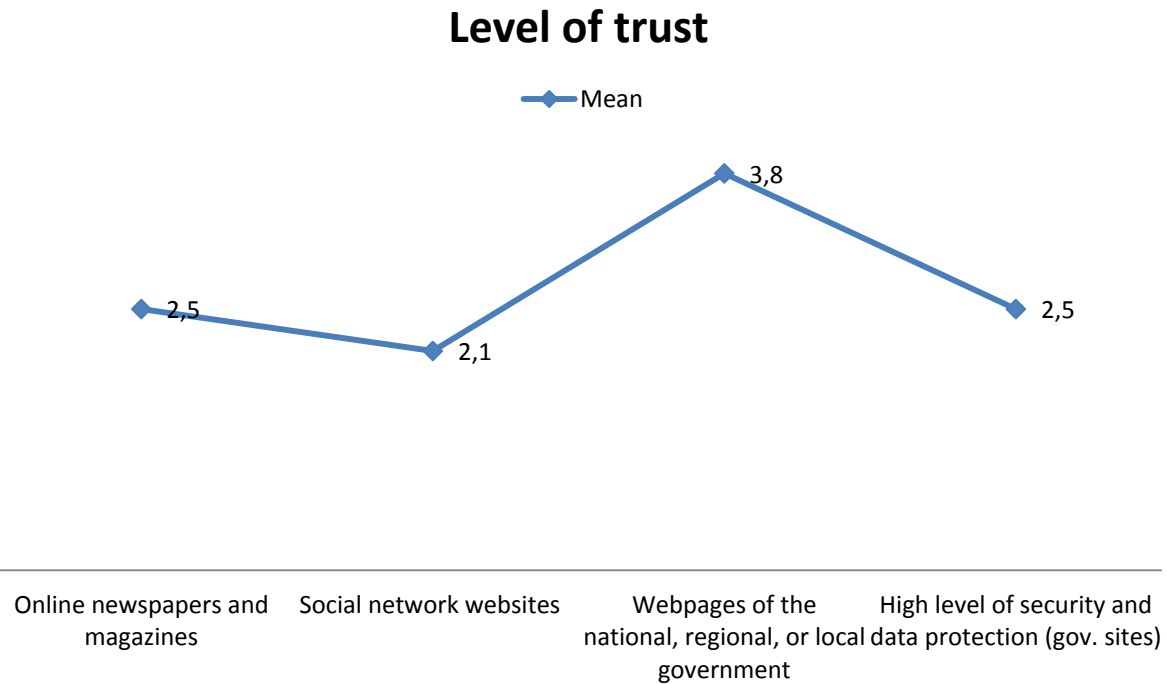


Patterns of official information seeking habits

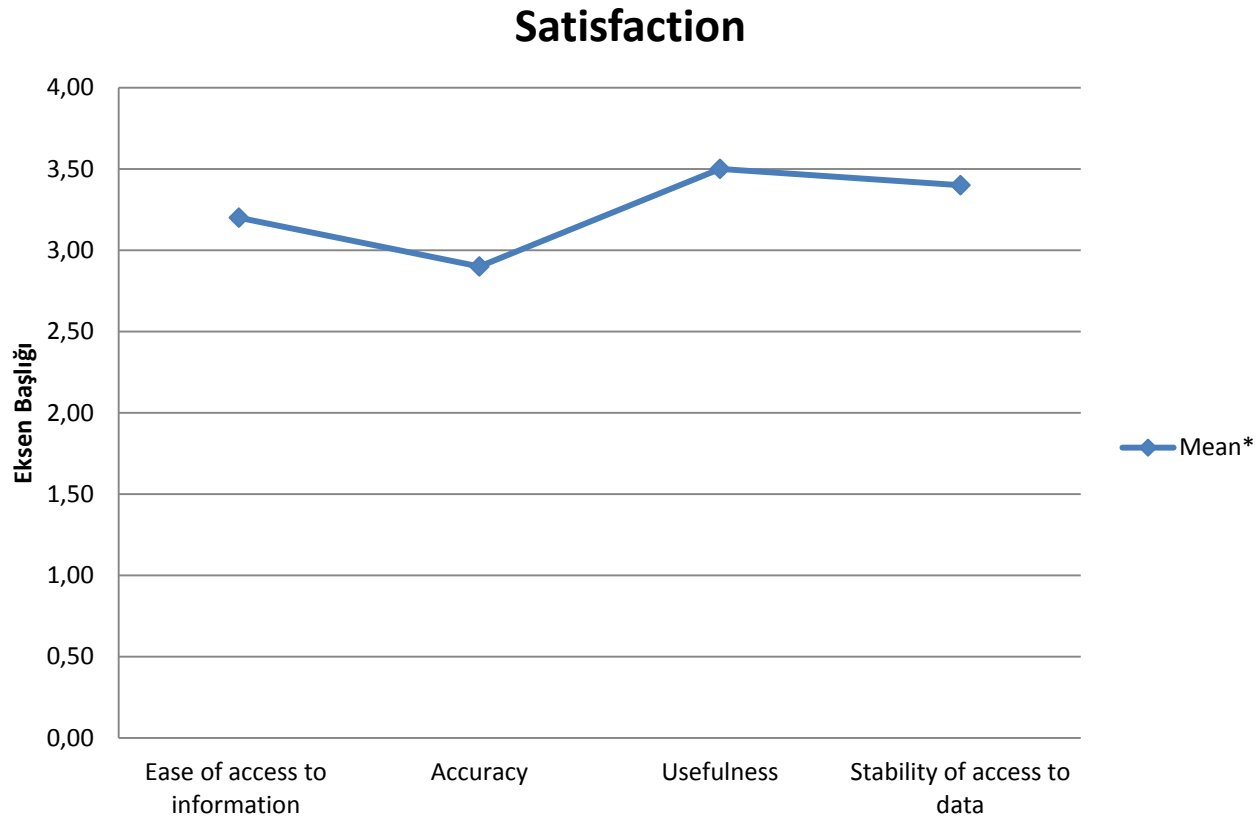
Preferred sources of information



Level of trust



Satisfaction with information found at the official websites



Conclusions

- student dedicate majority of their online time to hobbies, leasure, and entertainment
- activities connected with e-democracy – underrepresented
- 4th year students – slightly more active in e-democracy
- interest primarily for issues connected with immediate academic tasks

- students do not exercise their rights (either as citizens or as future legal system workers)
- reasons:
 - perception of no influence on the work of civil servants
 - present curriculum
- survey outcomes:
 - 61.4 % became aware of the issue
 - course instructors decided to dedicate more attention to e-democracy within their courses in following academic years

Thank you for your
attention!

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