

YOUTH STUDY CROATIA 2018/2019



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YOUTH STUDIES SOUTHEAST EUROPE 2018/2019:

“FES Youth Studies Southeast Europe 2018/2019” is an international youth research project carried out simultaneously in ten countries in Southeast Europe: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and Slovenia. The main objective of the surveys has been to identify, describe and analyse attitudes of young people and patterns of behaviour in contemporary society.

The data was collected in early 2018 from more than 10,000 respondents aged 14–29 in the above-mentioned countries who participated in the survey. A broad range of issues were addressed, including young peoples’ experiences and aspirations in different realms of life, such as education, employment, political participation, family relationships, leisure and use of information and communications technology, but also their values, attitudes and beliefs.

Findings are presented in ten national and one regional study and its accompanying policy papers, which have been published in both English and the respective national languages.

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1

INTRODUCTION

On their way to adulthood, young people encounter many challenges that accompany the process of taking on permanent social roles. This complex process is shaped by various forces which ultimately determine its success. It is primarily influenced by individual aspirations and efforts of young people to self-actualise in their chosen social roles, in line with their individual abilities and with how they envision their lives. Successful assumption of social roles does not depend solely on young people, their values, potential, and aspirations, but also on the society in which they live. Transition from youth to adulthood is also shaped by society's expectation of young people to successfully internalise dominant social values and behaviours which will contribute to social stability and continuity, but also to the growth of developmental and other capacities of a given society. Socially conditioned circumstances are often the ones that determine the pace and quality of joining the world of adults. In other words, individual life choices take place within the framework of an existing social structure and socioeconomic as well as sociocultural defaults which determine the opportunities and resources available to young people (Ilišin and Spajić Vrkaš 2017). In addition, optimal social integration faces new challenges due to dynamic shifts characteristic of all contemporary societies, including Croatian. These social shifts have a particularly strong effect on the population which is in the process of learning and acquiring ways to navigate and self-actualise in the competitive world of adults. There is therefore a need for continuous study of young people with respect to many social areas (from family, employment and leisure time to politics) in order to gain as holistic an insight as possible into the social position, needs, and interests of youth.

Recent findings of youth research in Croatia (Ilišin et al. 2013; Ilišin and Spajić Vrkaš 2017) indicate an overall decline in the social position of youth when compared to the position of generations at the end of the twentieth century. Most young people tend to respond to these unfavourable conditions by withdrawing into their private spheres and further distancing themselves from the social-political and public spheres. Familial and individual resour-

ces have been identified as the most trusted sources of support when facing challenges, while greater and better-quality involvement is awaited from social actors expected to ensure adequate conditions for a successful transition from youth to adulthood. Young people approach long-term insecure and unpredictable social circumstances pragmatically, choosing individual solutions at their disposal, and expressing confidence in their own capabilities and life strategies. In addition, studies have detected tendencies that could be interpreted to indicate a decline in enthusiasm and aspirations of youth in the context of economically and socially unstable conditions. In line with the value- and ideology-related turmoil in Croatian society, a value polarisation has been identified between traditional and modernist orientations among youth. Furthermore, research indicates that youth are a heterogeneous group, and that a key differentiating factor among them happens to be their level of education, which affects not only their social status, but their patterns of behaviour, values, and attitudes as well.

The above is a summary of youth-research findings just before Croatia joined the European Union. Croatia has now been a member state for five years, during which more opportunities have opened up or become (seemingly) more available to young people. Moreover, youth respondents of the 2004 study thought that it would be their peers who would gain the most from Croatia's EU membership (Ilišin and Radin 2007). While it might still be too early to unequivocally say whether the expectations of the previous generation were justified or not, this study is a first step in that direction.

In addition to a methodology overview, the sociodemographic characteristics of youth and the conclusion, the contents of this Report include chapters analysing the attitudes, behaviours, and values of youth in relation to the following areas of life: family, education, employment, values, politics, mobility and leisure.

2

METHODOLOGY

This study presents the findings of the *FES Youth Studies Southeast Europe 2018* empirical research for Croatia as the second joint research project conducted by the Institute for Social Research in Zagreb (ISRZ) and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) in Zagreb. The study was conceptualised and conducted as part of an international youth research project, simultaneously carried out in ten countries of southeast Europe and the western Balkans: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, and Slovenia.

The main objective of the study is to identify, describe, and analyse youth attitudes and patterns of behaviour in contemporary Croatian society. The study also aims to establish tendencies and dynamics of youth attitudes in comparison with the 2012 study carried out by FES and ISRZ (Ilišin et al. 2013).

A standardised questionnaire with closed questions was used for data collection, with the option of including up to ten questions specific to youth in individual countries included in the study.

The youth sample was stratified in terms of the size of counties and places of residence, as well as age and gender, comprising a final 1,500 respondents between the ages of 14 and 29 from the entire country. The survey was carried out during January, February, and March 2018 using the CAPI method, with the average interview being 56 minutes long. The field research was conducted by research agency Henda from Zagreb. The data was entered into an SPSS database, and weighting to the population values was conducted according to the age and gender structure within each strata (region and type of community).

The statistical processing involved a univariate (response distribution), bivariate (correlation; chi-squared test; t-test; variance analysis), and multivariate analysis (factor analysis), depending on the type of variable and the needs of the analysis.

The analyses also assessed intra-generational differentiations with regard to gender, age, and respondents' levels of education as well as those of their fathers; depending on the topic and related theoretical expectations, other sociodemographic characteristics were used, such as socioeconomic status, the number of books within a household, religious self-identification, and the like. Interpretation only took into account differences of statistical significance at the level of probability equal to or less than 0.01.

3

SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUTH

AGE, GENDER AND RESIDENTIAL STATUS

The average age of study participants was 22: as reflected in their share in the population, the youngest (14 to 19) and the oldest age cohort (25 to 29) each accounted for 35 per cent of the sample, whereas the 20–24 age cohort accounted for 31 per cent.

Given that the youth sample was representative with regard to gender, type of community/residential status and region, it consisted of 51 per cent female and 49 per cent male participants from Northern Croatia (23 per cent); Dalmatia (20 per cent); Zagreb (18 per cent); Istria, Gorski Kotar and Primorje (11 per cent); and Lika, Kordun and Banija (eight per cent). With regard to residential status, respondents were from rural areas (39 per cent), towns (37 per cent), Zagreb (16 per cent), and macroregional centres such as Split, Osijek, and Rijeka (nine per cent). In terms of their subjective estimates, most respondents described their place of residence as urban (46 per cent), followed by rural (40 per cent), and finally by a little over one-tenth of youth describing where they lived in terms of different proportions of both rural and urban elements: nine per cent saw their place of residence as more rural than urban, whereas five per cent thought it more urban than rural.

EDUCATION AND SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS

The social status of respondents is often determined by the educational level of their parents, which impacts their attitudinal and behavioural characteristics as well. Youth whose parents attained a four-year, upper-secondary-level education (e.g. upper-secondary-level grammar schools, *gimnazije*) make up the commensurately largest share of all participants, with more mothers (41 per cent) achieving this level of education than fathers (33 per cent). The second-largest group includes participants whose parents completed a vocational upper-secondary-level education (27 per cent mothers, 33 per cent fathers) and participants whose parents completed various degrees of higher education, with slightly more fathers (27 per cent) than mothers (24 per cent) in this status. The lowest percentage of participants comprises youth with parents of lowest levels of education, that is, (un)completed lower-secondary-level school, with mothers being slightly more represented than fathers in this respect at seven and five per cent, respectively.

Although the participants' level of education did not vary much from the previous round of research (Ilišin et al. 2013), certain changes were detected in the levels of education of participants' parents (Figure 3.1). A relative increase was noted in the share of participants whose parents completed three-year vocational upper-secondary-level schools as well as a drop in the share of those whose parents completed a four-year upper-secondary-level education. At the same time, the new round of research saw a higher share of participants with higher-education-level parents.

An analysis of the correlation between the level of education of participants and the level of education of their parents places Croatia among those societies with low social mobility (Matković 2011; Potočnik 2011, 2014; Hodžić 2014; Baranović 2015; *Income, Social Inclusion and Living Conditions 2014*), which implies that young people face extremely slim chances of attaining higher levels of education, and consequently a higher social standing, than those of their parents. In other words, stable patterns of social reproduction are entrenched in Croatian society, rendering existing demarcations between social classes or socioeconomic categories highly impermeable. This finding was confirmed by the latest round of research: namely, there is a significant and positive correlation between the education levels of participants

and the education levels of their parents ($\chi^2=218.40$; $\chi^2=203.34$),¹ where half the participants who have completed a higher education degree have parents with the same level of education, whereby among the higher-education-level participants only a mere ten per cent have mothers, and six per cent fathers, with the lowest levels of education. In other words, the educational achievements of youth significantly correlate with the educational status of their parents.

Since real or personal property is a potential indicator of the economic resources of participants, i.e. of their primary families, study participants were given the opportunity to disclose whether, and in what quantities, they and/or their parents owned any items in a wide price range, from a mobile phone to real estate² (table 3.1).

Although this instrument is not entirely compatible with the content of Eurostat's measurement of material deprivation,³ it is possible to extrapolate the share of respondents who are materially deprived. The lion's share, or 84 per cent, of respondents accordingly own a minimum of one item out of seven or more (out of the total ten – Table 3.1⁴). Bearing in mind that the study indicators were not identical to those of Eurostat, a highly cautious conclusion can be drawn that the sample contained 16 per cent of materially deprived youth,⁵ or six per cent of severely materially deprived youth who did not own a minimum of three/four items from the questionnaire. In comparison, and noting the difference in methodology, according to Eurostat's data (which to a certain extent corresponds to the above) the share of the materially deprived population of 15–29 years of age was 14 per cent, which is close to the estimated average share of the same category in the EU (16 per cent),⁶ whereas the share of severely materially deprived youth amounted to 13 per cent in Croatia, which is significantly higher than the nine per cent EU average.⁷

Despite material deprivation, which is somewhat present (16 per cent of participants did not own at least three items from the questionnaire), as few as two per cent of the study participants described their financial situation as insufficient to meet basic living expenses. In other words, two per cent of participants lacked the means to pay for basic utilities and food or could afford food and utilities, but not things like clothing and footwear. A relative majority of 39 per cent stated that they had enough financial resources to provide for food, clothing and footwear, but not enough to afford more expensive things like a refrigerator or a television set. Almost as many youth (38 per cent) stated that they could afford the more expensive items, but not as expensive as a car or a flat, whereas 18 per cent said that they were able to afford everything necessary for a good standard of living.

There was, expectedly, a significant positive correlation between both these indicators of economic status ($\rho=0.3$). In other words, those with greater financial means also owned more things.⁸ There was also a significant positive individual correlation between both indicators and the education levels of respondents and that of their fathers, where a higher education level of the parent significantly contributed to obtaining a better

FIGURE 3.1: **Comparative graph of educational levels of respondents and their parents (%)**

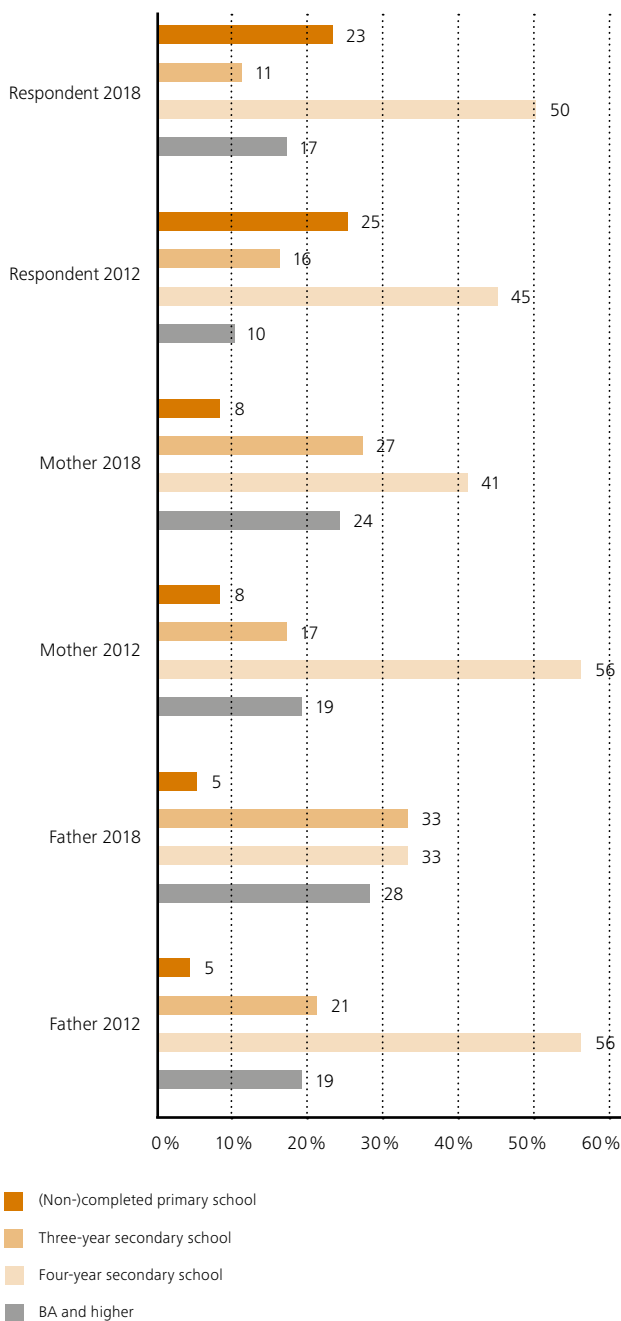


TABLE 3.1: **Material ownership in participants' households (%)**

	None	1	2	3 and more
A washing machine	1	86	11	2
A house or apartment	3	82	12	2
An internet connection at home	5	80	11	4
A car	9	61	26	4
A personal computer or laptop	3	57	29	10
A dishwasher	42	50	6	1
An air conditioner	49	41	7	2
A bicycle	23	36	28	12
A motorbike	80	17	2	1
A mobile phone	0	14	18	67

financial and material status. With regard to the study participants, a considerable difference was noted between the economic status of those who had attained a higher education level and those who had completed three-year upper-secondary-level schools. Namely, the material ownership indicating material well-being was much higher among higher-education-level participants (F-ratio=15.58) than among those with a three-year upper-secondary-level education, as was their level of financial security (F-ratio=7.79). The participants' material status was also positively correlated with their fathers' level of education (F-ratio1=26.12; F-ratio2=14.56), where participants with the lowest-educated fathers reported the highest degree of material deprivation. These findings are consistent with European analyses that indicate a strong correlation between the educational status of parents and the socioeconomic status of youth: at the EU level, 31 per cent of children with lowest-educated parents are affected by severe material deprivation, as opposed to ten times less (three per cent) children with higher-education-level parents experiencing severe material deprivation (*Being Young In Europe Today 2015*).⁹ These findings are an indication of the mutual relationship between one's educational, social, and material status, but also of the existing system of social reproduction.

The socialisation of children and youth is marked by the cultural resources of the families in which they grew up, or are growing up. These cultural resources, or cultural capital (Bourdieu 1977), are determined by status and class patterns which are often unconsciously "inherited" or internalised by young people on their way to adulthood. Thus, youth with a higher level of cultural capital¹⁰ (higher level of cultural knowledge, cultural preferences, or cultural goods ownership) also tend to have greater academic success and pursue tertiary education more often (Košutić 2017). The study also included the number of books in a family household as one of many possible indicators of cultural capital: one-quarter of Croatian youth grew up in a household with up to ten books, whereas 20 per cent grew up with between ten and twenty books. The share of households containing 21 – 30

books, as well as those with 31 – 50 books, was 13 per cent each. About one-tenth of youth had 50 – 100 books at their disposal, while just over one-tenth grew up with more than 100 books.¹¹ As expected, this indicator was positively and significantly correlated with the fathers' level of education (F-ratio=21.19), but also with the education level of the respondents themselves (F-ratio=38.45), which implies that a higher level of family cultural capital indicates a higher economic status of families (which is confirmed by the significant correlation between this cultural capital indicator and material goods ownership (rho=0.315)), which in turn correlates with a higher level of social competence acquired by young people in the process of education.

Quality of life is related to the characteristics of one's living space, such as the number of rooms in the house/flat in which young people grow up. On average, study participants' family homes had three rooms and four household members (participants included), and most participants (76 per cent) had their own rooms within their households. This percentage is considerably lower than in the previous round of research, when 91 per cent of participants reported having a room of their own. The chances of young people having a room of their own diminished considerably if they lived with a greater number of household members (t=7.58), particularly siblings ($\chi^2=35.98$), but also their own children ($\chi^2=7.61$), and if their fathers had lower levels of education ($\chi^2=14.60$), which definitely suggests a correlation between more comfortable living space and family socioeconomic status. Nevertheless, a room of one's own is merely one of many indicators of one's quality of living; on its own, it is not a sufficient indicator of relevant trends. Eurostat data should therefore also be considered,¹² according to which the overcrowding rate for Croatia's general population amounted to 41 per cent in 2016. In other words, this means that two-fifths of Croatia's population lived in households with insufficient living space, which is double the EU average (17 per cent). Even so, data suggests a mild downward trend in Croatia's household overcrowding rate, from 45 per cent in 2011 to 41 per cent in 2016.

NATIONALITY AND ETHNICITY

Almost all respondents declared themselves as ethnic Croats (97 per cent), and 98 per cent had a Croatian passport/citizenship. Most respondents' parents had both been born in Croatia (90 per cent), while ten per cent had parents who were born elsewhere, seven per cent of whom were born in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Almost all respondents' parents (95 per cent) were also ethnic Croats.

4

FAMILY AND FRIENDS

KEY FINDINGS

- A large majority of Croatian youth live in households with their closest family members. Four-fifths of youth live with their mothers, two-thirds with their fathers, just over a half with their siblings, and one-tenth live with their extended family members, grandparents. One-fifth of youth live with their partners/spouses. Three-fifths live in four-member and three-member households, and one-quarter of youth live in households of five or more members.
- Almost three-quarters of participants live in their parental homes, one-fifth live on their own, and one-quarter would prefer to live on their own if their financial circumstances allowed it.
- Young people endorse the values of their families; most get along well with their parents and would raise their own children in the same way they were raised themselves.
- Young people trust marriage: four-fifths envision their future as married and with children. Alternatives other than marriage are rare in future expectations of Croatian youth.
- With regard to gender roles, women express less acceptance of traditional, patriarchal attitudes than men with lower levels of education, who are more accepting of these attitudes.

INTRODUCTION

The family is a primary social institution which performs different functions: from the socialisation of children and maintaining intimate connections among its adult members, to providing its members with economic and emotional support (Hammond, Cheney and Pearsey 2015). The family is also a source of social

identity, as children are born into the social class of their parents, with their racial, ethnic, and religious identities, all of which affect their life outcomes, depending on their position in the social hierarchy (Barkan 2011).

The structural shifts that have occurred in modern families no longer presuppose a traditional model of the male provider, which started to taper off in Croatia back in the socialist period, when women had a fairly straightforward opportunity to take the position of a second, and most often secondary, family provider. After the 2008 recession put an additional strain on the management of most citizens' family resources, cutting back on basic life expenses went against female labour, which can contribute to or save family resources in various ways during such times of crises. Given that family structure depends on broader social influences, research has identified broader demographic factors as indirect causes of family shifts, such as depopulation and population ageing (Gelo, Akrap and Čipin 2005).

The average marriage age has been steadily increasing, women have been postponing childbearing, and the liberalisation of women's social status, that is, the reduction in discrimination and gender-based labour segregation (Topolčić 2008), has broached multiple questions regarding the division of domestic and family labour. The traditional assignment of the majority of housework and childcare to women still prevails in Croatia (Topolčić 2001; Gelo, Smolić and Strmota 2011; Bouillet 2014). However, when it comes to the perception of family obligations and family life, youth attitudes are shifting toward detraditionalisation and individualisation (Bouillet 2014: 52), which affects their own family plans. Longitudinally speaking, the percentage of students perceiving family obligations as positive is declining as they are perceived more as a burden, especially among women.

Interestingly, young people are sceptical of traditional families, but at the same time find themselves relying not only on their own resources, but on the economic, social, and cultural capital of their parents (Ilišin 2014). Compared to other European countries, Croatian youth rank highest in terms of leaving the parental home (at 30 years of age or older): three rounds of longitudinal research (1999, 2010, and 2013) found that three-quarters of Croatian youth still lived with their parents (Potočnik 2017: 62). In interpreting these findings, it is important to note the “housing dependence of youth,” caused by high unemployment, difficulties in obtaining bank loans, as well as unfavourable tenancy conditions; the latest data suggests that the pattern of youth dependence on their families is being perpetuated in Croatia (Potočnik 2017).

HOUSEHOLDS, LIVING WITH PARENTS, AND THE HOUSING SITUATION OF YOUTH

Croatian youth tend to live in households with their mothers (77 per cent) and fathers (69 per cent), siblings (55 per cent), and partners/spouses (19 per cent). 12 per cent of the participants in the study were living with their children, while 11 per cent were living with their grandparents. At the time of research, four per cent were living by themselves, two per cent were living with their friends and other relatives, while one per cent of youth were living with “someone else.” Evidently, Croatian youth mostly live together with their parents and siblings, whereas more traditional, extended forms of households with grandparents or other relatives are less common¹³. According to available research data, youth who live on their own tend to be over 25 years of age ($\chi^2=40.71$), whereas younger respondents tend to live together with their families. Respondents with the highest levels of education (bachelor’s degree or higher) live on their own more often than others ($\chi^2=21.63$). Participants living with their partners/spouses tend to be older, over 25 years of age ($\chi^2=35.54$), most probably having completed or in the process of completing their education process (higher education and three-year upper-secondary school education) ($\chi^2=143.26$), whose fathers had (not) completed a lower-secondary level of education ($\chi^2=16.04$). Also, older participants ($\chi^2=288.87$) with a three-year upper-secondary education tend to live with children more often ($\chi^2=78.59$), indicating that they were more agile in starting families than other youth groups, and that their process of becoming independent started earlier than that of other youth groups. They also tend to come from families where fathers have an (un)completed lower-secondary education ($\chi^2=13.38$).

Most youth tend to live in four-member households (36 per cent), followed by households with five or more members (25 per cent), and those with three members (24 per cent). The least number of young people live in two-member (11 per cent) or one-member households (four per cent). On average, Croatian youth households have 3.8 members, which is considerably high-

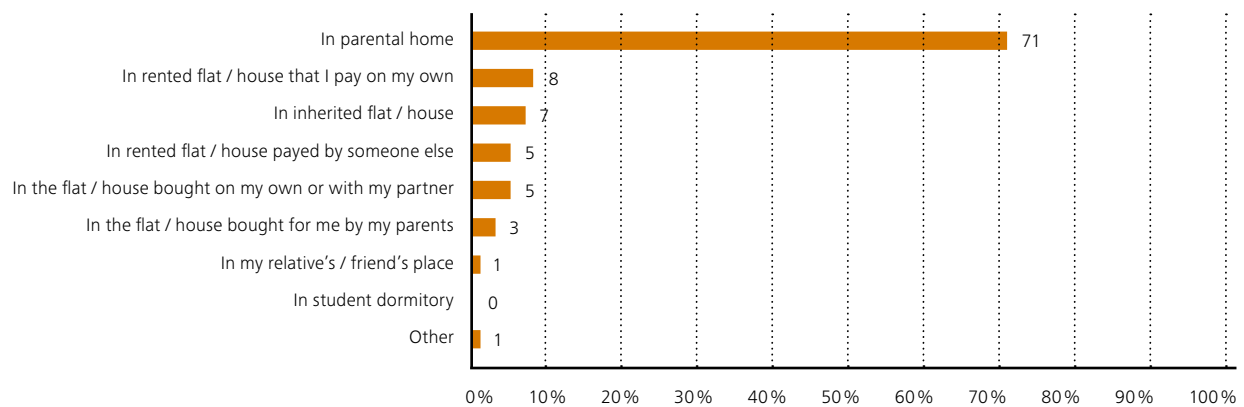
er than the EU-28 average of 2.3 members (*People in the EU 2018*), but also higher than the Croatian household average of 2.8 members in 2011 (*Hrvatska u brojka 2015*). Furthermore, according to 2016 data, the two most common types of household in the EU comprised one or two members, accounting for two-thirds of European families (*People in the EU 2018*), which suggests that the structure and size of households of Croatian youth greatly differ from those of the EU average. In fact, Croatia tops the EU household-member numbers, as opposed to Sweden, which has the least number of members per household (1.9) (*Euronews 2017*). The number of members in youth households in Croatia far exceeds both the Croatian and the EU average, which is, among other things, an effect of their remaining in their parental homes for a long time. The youngest study participants (14 to 19 years of age) tended to live in larger households of four, five or more members, which distinguished them from other age groups (F-ratio=52.81). For the most part, youth living in the largest families had an (un)completed lower-secondary, or three-year upper-secondary education (F-ratio=42.38). Households with five or more members more often included participants of lower social status or fathers with an (un)completed lower-secondary education, as opposed to participants living in four-member households, whose fathers tended to have attained four-year upper-secondary education or higher education levels. One-member and two-member households mostly consisted of youth with the highest levels of education, which probably also suggests that they had embarked on living independently ($\chi^2=38.10$).

Consistently with their generation, most youth (up to 19 years of age) had both parents still living (90 per cent), while eight per cent had a deceased father, and one per cent each had a deceased mother or father. Within the group with both parents still living, the majority comprised the youngest participants ($\chi^2=45.06$) and those with an (un)completed lower-secondary school education ($\chi^2=30.05$) whose fathers’ education level is higher than an (un)completed lower-secondary school ($\chi^2=11.91$).

Almost three-quarters of youth were living in their parental homes (Figure 4.1), continuing the trend identified by the longitudinal analysis of housing status of youth carried out from the late 1990s to 2013 (Potočnik 2017: 62). The findings of Eurostat (2018) confirm such a trend where the percentage of youth living with their parents maintained its upward trend from 2010, rising from 69 per cent to 72 per cent in 2016. On the other hand, in the EU-28 in 2016 the average per cent of young people (18–34 years of age) who were living with their parents was considerably lower (48 per cent). This also confirmed the dependent status of youth and their late process of emancipation in Croatia (Ilišin and Spajić Vrkaš 2017), especially in comparison to that of their peers in the EU¹⁴.

The reason why most Croatian youth live with their parents is evident from the following motivation: 69 per cent of participants stated that it was the simplest solution, compared to 56 per cent in 2012. One-quarter would prefer to live on their own if their finances allowed it, as opposed to 33 per cent in 2012. It is therefore apparent that young people choose to live with their

FIGURE 4.1: Housing status of youth (%)



parents for practical reasons, but also because of the culture of living: a number of southern European countries, including Croatia, presuppose multigenerational households, a concept unimaginable in northern cultures. Also, compared to 2012, when four per cent of youth stated that they would pursue independent living if their parents were to agree, a mere one per cent shared this sentiment in 2018. Most youth who found living with their parents to be the simplest and most comfortable solution tended to be 19 or younger, whereas older respondents would mostly prefer to live on their own if they had sufficient financial means ($\chi^2=85.77$). Respondents with the highest levels of education and those with a completed three-year upper-secondary education would more often prefer to live on their own, finances permitting ($\chi^2=99.49$), while respondents with a completed lower-secondary education considered it simplest and most comfortable to live with their parents.

FAMILY VALUES

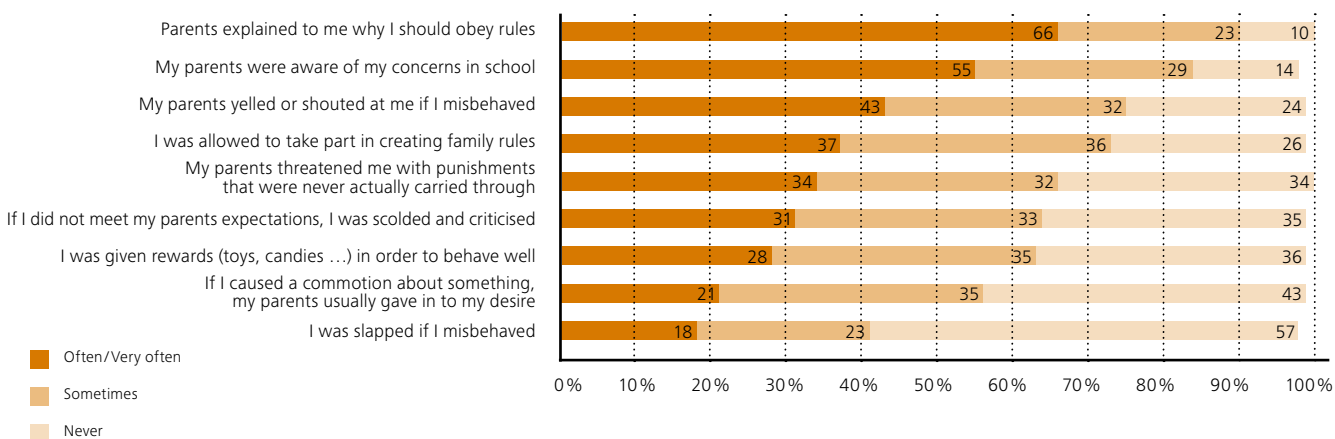
The following section examines one way to establish an inter-generational shift or a shift in value stability, demonstrating whether and to what extent the youth population accepts the values of their parents. According to the study results, 55 per cent of youth got along with their parents despite “sometimes [having] differences in opinion,” whereas 34 per cent claimed to “get along very well” with their parents. These results are almost entirely consistent with those from the 2012 round of research, when 55 per cent of youth “got along” with their parents (despite occasional differences in opinion), and 31 per cent claimed to “get along very well.” These results suggest that young people in fact agree with their parents when it comes to many values and norms, including the value spectrum of preserving family tradition, acquisition of wealth, social prestige, social advancement, maintaining togetherness and warmth in the family home, etc. (Golubović 1981, after Milić 2007). It is fair to say that there is a stability when it comes to internalising and abiding by family val-

ues, and that there is an unmitigated intergenerational value transmission in place. This is also corroborated by the fact that only eight per cent of Croatian youth reported arguing often with their parents, while no more than one per cent claimed to have a very conflictual relationship with their parents. The 2012 round of research found a slightly higher number of youth arguing often with their parents (12 per cent), while two per cent claimed their relationship with their parents was very conflictual. Male participants seemed to find it easier to become involved in conflicts with their parents ($\chi^2=13.07$) or to express a contrary opinion, while female participants tended to be more loyal to family values. These results can be interpreted by differences in gender socialisation, which, as it is well-known, demands more placid, gender-appropriate behaviour from girls, while stimulating boys to be more free and assertive. Furthermore, acceptance of family values in this spectrum is indicative of how gender roles were distributed in the family (gender-based chore distribution, inter-generational relationships, child-raising methods, etc.).

Parenting styles affect the outcomes of adolescence, especially when it comes to accepting particular forms of risk behaviours. In earlier times, there was generational consensus as parents looked to older generations for child-raising advice (Pernar 2010), whereas today’s parents greatly rely on expert assistance in addition to their own insights and beliefs. Parenting styles have different effects on personality development in children, and results show that supportive parenting styles coupled with appropriate control are more suitable for raising youth, and that parental support is correlated with lower levels of depression in adolescents (Aquilino and Supple 2001, citing Ferić-Šlehan 2008).

The variables describing parental styles comprise three items each, which, taken together, describe three types of parenting: authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive parenting styles (Figure 4.2).¹⁵ Percentage shares indicate that around two-thirds of youth have experienced one of the permissive parenting components (e.g. consensus with parents on respecting rules). At the same time, other components of permissive parenting were less common: for instance, frequent or highly frequent parental concern

FIGURE 4.2: Parenting styles (%)



for school performance was correlated with how half the participants were raised, while two-fifths had participated in helping devise the family rules. Authoritarian forms of parenting were correlated with parenting style: for example, two-fifths of participants had experienced shouting, one-fifth had experienced physical violence (face-slapping), while criticism was part of the parenting style among one-third of the participants.

In this round of research, the most prominent parenting style was authoritative (F -ratio=373.46), whereas no significant difference was noted between the other two styles. The authoritative parenting style was more prevalent among female than male respondents ($t=5.05$), among respondents who had mostly (not) completed a lower-secondary school education (F -ratio=4.65), whose fathers tended to have completed a four-year upper-secondary education (F -ratio=6.83). The authoritarian parenting style was more prevalent among male than female respondents ($t=3.28$) and participants whose fathers had (not) completed a lower-secondary education (F -ratio=3.96), while permissive parenting was more often experienced by youth who had (not) completed lower-secondary education (F -ratio=5.23) and whose fathers had mostly completed four-year upper-secondary education (F -ratio=8.71).

Acceptance of family values is reflected in the degree of support expressed for how young people might raise their own children versus how they were raised by their parents. Only five per cent of participants stated that their own parenting style would be "totally different," whereas 24 per cent opted for raising their children "differently." One-half would raise their children "almost the same way" as they were raised (50 per cent), while 15 per cent would choose the same style of parenting¹⁶. Acceptance of family values displays gender differentiation, meaning that female participants were more likely to raise their children "almost the same way" as they were raised themselves, whereas the male participants would adopt a different or completely different parenting style ($\chi^2=18.71$). Interestingly, "totally different" and "different" were options most frequently chosen by respondents who had completed a three-year secondary education ($\chi^2=35.28$), who,

as was said above, enter the labour market sooner and are quicker to start families of their own. In contrast, youth with lower-secondary education, but also higher-education-level youth, would choose to raise their children "almost the same way." The level of education of participants' fathers proved to be significant in this respect ($\chi^2=42.52$): those who would adopt completely different and different parenting styles tended to have fathers with lower-secondary education.

The person with the highest influence over an individual's important decisions is their mother (47 per cent), while 30 per cent of participants named their father as assuming this role: while this corroborates the decline of patriarchal authority, it also confirms the importance of the role mothers play as the primary child-care provider, as sharing parental responsibilities has still not caught on in our culture. Namely, fathers are more expected to be successful outside the family home, which in turn shapes parental roles as well (Pernar 2010). These results are consistent with those from 2012, when 43 per cent of participants named their mothers as the parent having the greatest influence, followed to a lesser extent by their fathers (27 per cent). The segment of youth population naming their father as the biggest influence in their lives tended to be male ($\chi^2=15.42$), belong to the youngest age cohort (19 years and younger) ($\chi^2=108.53$), and most often have the lowest – lower-secondary – level of education ($\chi^2=51.07$). The mother was named as the biggest life influence by more female respondents ($\chi^2=35.86$), those from the youngest cohort ($\chi^2=112.19$), and those with the lowest levels of education ($\chi^2=50.68$). Among close family members, those with the highest influence were sisters (eight per cent) and brothers (six per cent), followed by an almost negligible influence of grandfathers (two per cent) and grandmothers (one per cent), meaning that the oldest family members, partially due to living separately, have no influence on young Croats' life decisions. Existing partners or spouses influenced important decision-making in 15 per cent of the cases, while six per cent were influenced by friends. 19 per cent of youth reported making life decisions independently, without anyone's influence. There is a gender divide here as well, as

female participants tended to make independent decisions less frequently than males ($\chi^2=19.05$). Independent decision-making increases with age, peaking among the 25-and-older cohort; strikingly, however, 74 per cent of youth in this age group still depended on others in making important decisions ($\chi^2=67.31$). Young people with higher-education degrees tended to be the most independent in making life decisions ($\chi^2=40.21$)¹⁷.

Young people have not lost trust in traditional institutions, namely marriage: they see themselves as being married in the future, with a family of their own (80 per cent) (compared to 76 per cent in 2012), or married without children (two per cent). Domestic partnerships register very low in young Croatians' vision of their future, as no more than three per cent see themselves living in an alternative form of marriage with a partner and family of their own, while the same percentage see themselves in a domestic partnership with no children (at six per cent, this share was higher in 2012). Data would appear to indicate that Croatian youth are out of touch with European trends when it comes to alternative forms of marriage, according to which 15 per cent of EU-28 youth aged 20–29 were living in a civil union,¹⁸ while this figure is only 2.9 per cent in Croatia, but is as high as 18.3 per cent in Sweden or 14.3 per cent in France (*Eurostat 2015*).

A minority of youth (three per cent) see their future as single and without children (compared to six per cent in 2012), whereas one per cent see themselves as future single parents. Marriage is the hoped-for future across the board for those respondents whose fathers attained a three-year upper-secondary or higher education levels, while participants most likely to cohabit are those with an (un)completed lower-secondary education ($\chi^2=26.40$)¹⁹.

For a happy life, Croatian youth found it equally important to "live in a good country" (83 per cent) and to have the right spouse or partner (82 per cent). These results suggest that one of the most important personal choices is equated with the future of the country and the importance of structural circumstances for youth who are merely on the verge of actual social integration. Further, 77 per cent of Croatian youth find happiness in the idea of having children, which indicates that the majority want to self-actualise as parents, whereas "having a lot of friends" registered lowest in this sequence (70 per cent): although important, friendship was not considered to be the most important factor for a happy life when compared to family life. The importance of choosing a life partner for a happy life was mostly reported by women, followed by men to a lesser degree, making gender differentiation significant in this respect ($\chi^2=9.96$), as well as in the case of having children, which was more important to female than to male respondents ($\chi^2=10.31$). Having a spouse was mostly important to respondents whose fathers had completed a three-year upper-secondary education ($\chi^2=36.87$), as was having children ($\chi^2=44.84$). With regard to friendship, this was held to be most important by the youngest age cohort ($\chi^2=22.89$), mostly those who had (not) completed a lower-secondary education ($\chi^2=26.12$). Living in a good country correlated solely with the fathers' level of education

($\chi^2=36.13$), making this issue the least important for those whose fathers had the highest levels of education, and consequently a probability of greater socioeconomic opportunities as well.

MARRIAGE, PARENTHOOD, AND PATRIARCHAL VALUES

As is well-known, the average age of marriage has increased with the modernisation of society and increased education levels and employment of women. When asked about the most appropriate age for men and women to marry, study participants reported varying average ages: 26 years for women and 29 for men, although Figure 4.3 shows that the most represented category was 25–29 years of age for women, and 30 for men²⁰. Female respondents estimated the most appropriate age of marriage for women to be higher ($M=26.63$) than male respondents ($M=25.99$) ($t=3.41$), whereas the youngest respondents also had lower estimates for the most desirable age of marriage for women ($F\text{-ratio}=8.45$). Respondents with the highest levels of education thought women should marry at a later age ($F\text{-ratio}=7.41$) compared with respondents with lower levels of education.

FIGURE 4.3: The best age of marriage for men and women (%)

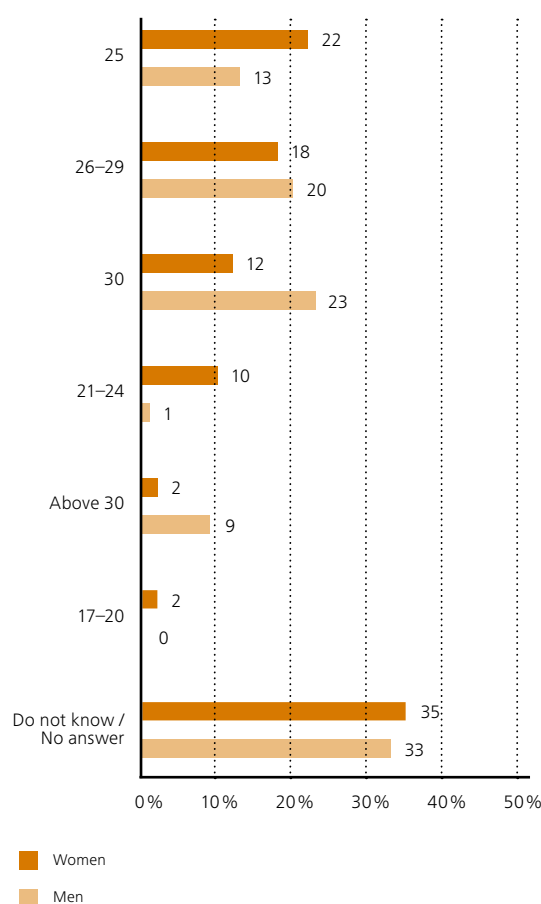
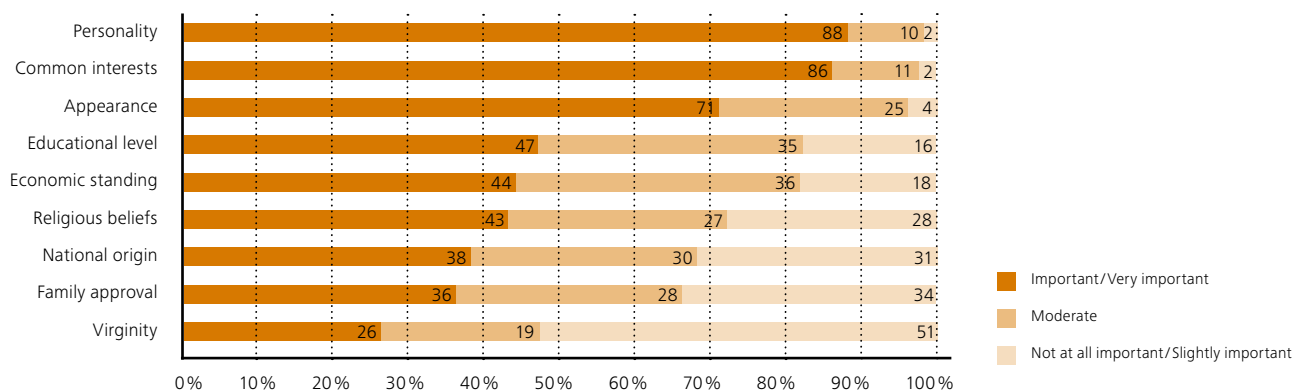


FIGURE 4.4: The importance of particular traits when choosing a spouse (%)



Gender did not prove significant with regard to opinions on the best age of marriage for men, but age did: the highest appropriate marriage age for men ($M=29.02$) was stated by the oldest age cohort (25 years and older) ($F\text{-ratio}=9.42$) and by the highest-educated cohort of participants, which differed greatly on this issue compared to other educational groups ($F\text{-ratio}=9.93$).

Most young Croatians were not parents at the time of research (83 per cent), and those who were parents tended to have between one and four children, or one to two on average ($M=1.45$). Respondents with children often came from the oldest age cohort ($\chi^2=282.12$) and had completed a three-year upper-secondary education or higher education degrees ($\chi^2=83.35$). Most youth parents had fathers who had (not) completed a lower-secondary education ($\chi^2=14.59$). With regard to planning to have children, respondents intended to have a minimum of one child and a maximum of five; on average, they planned to have two ($M=2.19$). The 25-and-older age cohort tended to plan for one child ($\chi^2=25.58$), while the central age cohort (20–24) more often planned for three or more children. Young people who intended to have more than three children were more likely to have fathers with a three-year upper-secondary education, whereas two children was mostly the plan envisaged by participants who had completed a four-year upper-secondary or higher education ($\chi^2=32.59$). Respondents had either had or planned to have a child at a minimum of 16 years of age and a maximum of 37, the average age being 28²¹ ($M=27.56$).

The choice of one's life partner would appear to indicate a predominance of post-modern values, with almost 90 per cent of youth citing the importance of a partner's personality, with common interests between partners figuring close behind (Figure 4.4). The 2012 study produced similar findings, when 88 per cent of youth stating that the personality of their future partners was important, with common interests receiving the same rating. Interestingly, 71 per cent of youth evaluated their life partners according to their physical appearance (compared to 73 per cent in 2012), whereas educational level, despite being cited as important, received a far lower rating at 47 per cent (54 per cent in 2012). The economic standing and religious beliefs of their spouses were

deemed important by over 40 per cent of youth. The importance of national/ethnic origin and family approval of one's spouse scored between 30 and 40 per cent importance, with the spouse's nationality/ethnicity being scored five per cent higher, and family approval eight per cent lower compared to the 2012 round of research. The least importance was attached to the potential spouse's virginity (26 per cent). Considering that this received a response ranking it as important or very important by ten per cent of participants in 2012, conservative attitudes appear to be on the rise in this respect.

Three patterns emerged on the scale of importance in choosing one's spouse:²² *traditionalism*; *socioeconomic capital*; and a *psychological motivation pattern*. The first, or *traditional* pattern, was least common among the oldest age cohort, and most common among the youngest cohort ($F\text{-ratio}=4.47$) and participants who had (not) completed a lower-secondary education ($F\text{-ratio}=16.46$). The *socioeconomic capital* pattern scored higher among female respondents ($F\text{-ratio}=2.56$), those from the youngest age cohort ($F\text{-ratio}=12.77$), and those with the lowest education ($F\text{-ratio}=15.90$). Acceptance of this pattern correlated significantly with fathers' level of education, with this being more salient among respondents whose fathers had attained higher education degrees, followed by four-year upper-secondary education ($F\text{-ratio}=9.92$). The third pattern of *psychological motivation* was more popular among women ($t=2.56$), respondents with a completed three-year upper-secondary education and those with the highest education levels ($F\text{-ratio}=4.43$), and finally among participants whose fathers had (not) completed a lower-secondary level of education ($F\text{-ratio}=5.65$).

According to research findings (Figure 4.5), around one-tenth of young participants disagreed when it comes to an equal distribution of household labour between men and women, while one-third were undecided, and 60 per cent considered sharing household labour desirable²³. As many as 40 per cent of youth agreed with the proposal that men should be the only providers in the family, with 30 per cent being undecided and just as many disagreeing. This example demonstrates that the idea of a male family provider is still very much affirmed, and that this model is

FIGURE 4.5: Attitudes on gender roles (%)

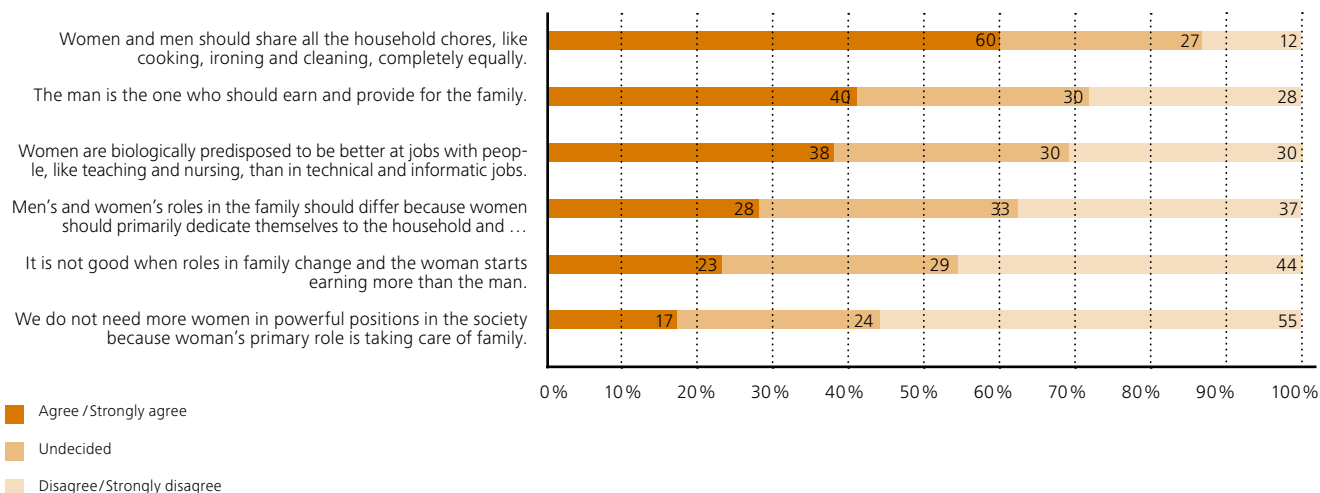
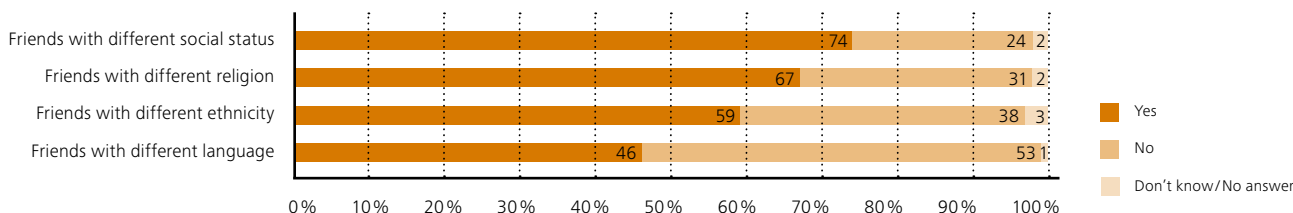


FIGURE 4.6: Friendships with people of different sociocultural backgrounds (%)



firmly entrenched in our culture and youth values. As many as 40 per cent of young respondents accepted essentialist stereotypes, according to which women are more predisposed to work with people, as are teachers, nurses, etc., than to pursue technical and IT occupations; one-third of participants were undecided, while 30 per cent disagreed.

Factor analysis established one factor referred to as *patriarchalism*.²⁴ This pattern was more accepted by male rather than female study participants ($t=9.80$) and by those with three-year upper-secondary-level education, followed by (un)completed lower-secondary-level education ($F\text{-ratio}=27.80$). In particular, study respondents with a three-year upper-secondary-level education were more prevalent among respondents with a high acceptance of this pattern, differing considerably from respondents with higher education, whereas participants who had (not) completed lower-secondary-level education differed significantly in terms of great acceptance of patriarchalism from their counterparts who had completed four-year upper-secondary-level education or obtained higher-education degrees. Evidently, the rejection of patriarchalism for the most part depends upon gender and education status: this conclusion has also been corroborated by other studies (Adamović and Maskalan 2017).

FRIENDS

The choice of friends is highly important in young people's lives, as it relates to peer groups in which adolescents mature and build their identities. The extent to which young people are willing to establish close relationships with people from sociocultural backgrounds different from their own is an indicator of their level of inclusiveness and social capital. The largest number of youth have friends with a different social status (74 per cent), followed by those of a different religion (67 per cent). Also, more than half form friendships with people of different ethnicities (59 per cent), while every second young person has friends who speak a different language (Figure 4.6).

The level of education of participants' fathers proved to be the most significant characteristic when it came to friendships with individuals from other sociocultural groups among all characteristics: linguistic ($F\text{-ratio}=23.15$); ethnic ($F\text{-ratio}=14.65$); religious ($F\text{-ratio}=28.09$); and social status ($F\text{-ratio}=29.05$). No other socio-demographic variable proved significant, which leads to the conclusion that the decision to form close relationships with "others" is significantly influenced by the family values and social background of the study participants.

5

EDUCATION

KEY FINDINGS

- As few as five per cent of Croatian youth believe that exams are never bought at their educational institutions, which indicates a pervasive perception of corruption in the educational sector.
- Higher average grades are more commonly achieved by youth who invest more time in studying and those who perceive less stress.
- An individual's level of education is significantly correlated with the financial situation in a given household as well as its number of books, which, consistently with previous research and existing theoretical assumptions, is indicative of the importance of family cultural capital and socioeconomic status in young people's educational achievements.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there have been discussions on reforming Croatia's primary and secondary education. The goal of the Comprehensive Curricular Reform is to modernise ways of teaching and shift from a conception of education as an internalisation of knowledge toward the concept of learning outcomes. The reform process was initiated after the all-encompassing Strategy for Education, Science, and Technology was adopted in 2014. In the sphere of tertiary education, the most important reform move has been joining the Bologna Process. The Bologna Declaration was signed in 2001, and the new programmes were implemented starting with the 2004–2005 academic year. Around ten years after implementation, discussions began on the need to revise what had been achieved and to further harmonise higher educational programmes. The fact that reform processes are needed in the sphere of Croatian education is also suggested by other indicators. Namely, according to the *Global Competitiveness Report 2017-2018* of the World Economic Forum (Schwab

2017), Croatia ranked 60th out of 137 countries in the fifth policy domain (pillar), which covers higher education and training. A positive aspect of Croatia's system is the education enrolment rate, which amounts to 98 per cent in secondary education (ranked 55th), and 69 per cent in tertiary education (ranked 27th). Another strength of the system is its low drop-out rate of 2.8 per cent for the 18–24 age cohort in 2016 (European Commission 2017).²⁵ However, in terms of the quality of its education system, Croatia ranked 112th and as low as 130th in terms of training and professional development of teaching staff (Schwab 2017). Furthermore, Croatia has eight public and two private universities as well as numerous universities of applied sciences and university colleges of applied sciences in its tertiary sector. However, Croatian universities have low global rankings, usually with the University of Zagreb or the University of Split being the leading institutions, depending on the year and the particular ranking.

Schooling and education account for a large part of young people's everyday lives, and the importance of this segment is accordingly reflected in youth research. Youth education studies have so far focussed on different aspects, comprising different levels of education. Specific topics that have been highlighted include the quality of education, the perception of education as part of an individual's personal development, and the influence of socioeconomic factors on academic success during various phases of education.

Despite a substantial share of youth claiming to be dissatisfied or only somewhat satisfied with the quality of education in Croatia, other studies have shown that only a minority of the participants perceived the schooling and educational system to be the most important current issue in Croatian society. The share of such individuals rose from six to eight per cent between 1999 and 2013 (Ilišin and Radin 2002; Ilišin 2005; Ilišin and Spajić Vrkaš 2017). On the other hand, young people are convinced that the quality of education can be improved, and Croatia's joining the EU was perceived as a realistic possibility for this goal (Ilišin and Radin 2002; Ilišin 2005; Ilišin et al. 2013; Ilišin and Spajić Vrkaš 2017).

Nevertheless, Croatia's EU accession process saw a decline in the conviction among young people that joining the Union would contribute to a better quality of education in the country (Ilišin and Spajić Vrkaš 2017).

EDUCATIONAL STRUCTURE AND ASPIRATIONS

In terms of educational structure, two per cent of study participants had an (un)completed lower-secondary education, 60 per cent had an upper-secondary education, while 17 per cent attained some level of higher education. Compared to 2012, there has been a two-per cent drop in the first group. Also, the share of higher-education-level participants has increased from 10 per cent in 2012. As is evident from their educational aspirations, recent years have seen an increase in the number of youth aspiring to complete a higher-education degree: namely, only one per cent wanted to complete a lower-secondary education, and 38 wanted to stop at an upper-secondary education. Finally, as many as 61 per cent aspired to attain some level of higher education. Research results were consistent with the lack of acknowledgment that both public discourse and the labour market have for undergraduate degrees (bachelor's degrees, BA): only ten per cent of Croatian youth wanted to complete their educational process at this level. On the other hand, as many as 35 per cent of respondents aspired to complete a master's degree and seven per cent a doctoral degree; in this respect, female respondents more often expressed a desire to complete different levels of higher education ($\chi^2=28.25$). The increased share of population who have attained higher education and youth aspirations toward completing higher education are potentially the result of Croatia's efforts to reach the goals it set with regard to the percentage of population with higher education and promoting the so-called knowledge society. However, despite the rising numbers of higher-education-level citizens and aspirations of young people toward higher education, it should be emphasised that "the rate of tertiary education attainment in Croatia has been on the rise in the past ten years, but began to stagnate in 2014. The share of citizens with higher education aged 30–34 was 29.5 per cent in 2016, far below the EU average of 39.1 per cent as well as Croatia's national 35 per cent target before 2020" (European Commission 2017: 8). In this respect, the high share of the young population in tertiary education (69 per cent) and their expressed desire to attain a higher-education degree should contribute to achieving this national goal and reaching the EU average. Furthermore, Croatia's youth are also exceptionally optimistic about their educational aspirations: as many as 81 per cent were certain that they would achieve their desired level of education.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

In terms of assessing the quality of education in Croatia, 41 per cent of respondents claimed to be satisfied, 22 per cent were not satisfied, and 37 per cent were somewhat satisfied (Figure 5.1). In other words, the average score on a 1-to-5 scale with regard to the quality of education was 3.2. These assessments are for the most part consistent with those from 2012 (Ilišin et al. 2013), but it should be noted that there was a six per cent drop in the "somewhat satisfied" category, mostly to "not satisfied at all." These findings suggest that the educational system has not seen any improvements in the past six years, but continued to generate a moderate level of (dis)satisfaction in young people. This opinion of young people on the mediocre quality of the education system is corroborated by World Economic Forum indicators as well, where Croatia ranked 112th out of 137 countries in terms of education quality (Schwab 2017).

FIGURE 5.1: Satisfaction of young people with the quality of education (%)

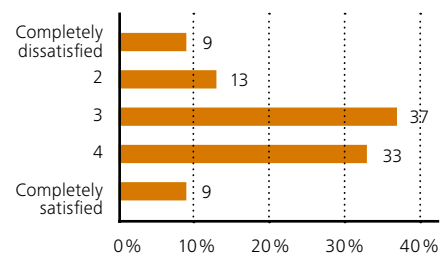
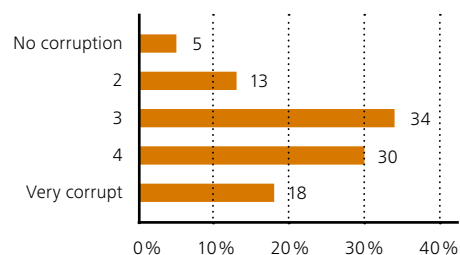


FIGURE 5.2: Youth perception of the prevalence of buying grades and exams at institutions of higher education (%)



Especially worrying in this respect is perceptions regarding the prevalence of corruption in education. As many as 48 per cent of Croatia's young people namely agreed with the statement that exams are bought at Croatian institutions of higher education, whereas merely five per cent were convinced that it never happens (Figure 5.2). A similar indicator emerged in the 2012 round of research, when almost half the participants were convinced that grades or exams were bought, with this perception rising among students of higher education (Ilišin et al. 2013). It should be noted that the 2012 questionnaire used a four-point scale,

whereas the latest study used a five-point scale. Of course, although this perception of corruption does not necessarily prove the existence of this level of corruption in education, it is surely related to overall trends in society and to the opinion, shared by 50 per cent of youth, that achieving success in Croatian society requires one to bribe influential people, that is, corruption.

Since other studies (Spajić Vrkaš and Potočnik 2017) have shown that young people consider education useful primarily in achieving a better standard of living and secure employment, this broaches the question of how adapted they think the education and training system is to the labour market. In this respect, the latest round of research has shown that a little over half of Croatian youth (51 per cent) believe that the country's education and training system was not well-adapted to the labour market. This attitude was corroborated by 2016 data, according to which the employment rate for those aged 20–34 who had completed their education one to three years prior to the research (ISCED 3–8) was 72.5 per cent, compared to the EU average of 78.2 per cent (European Commission 2017). Also, “the unemployment rate for tertiary graduates decreased in 2016 compared to the 2013 peak, from 11.3 per cent to 7.8 per cent, but still ranked fourth in the EU for this group of countries, behind Spain, Cyprus, and Portugal” (European Commission 2017: 8). However, when compared to youth populations in other countries that participated in the FES study, Croatia has the smallest share of young people who consider the education system to be out of touch with the labour world. How youth prepare for the job market can also be observed in the apprenticeship or internship opportunities available to them: 49 per cent of youth stated that they took part in these activities during their education process. Compared to 2012, apprenticeship and internship participation has expanded by around 30 per cent, which is an interesting finding as no major structural changes were introduced between the two rounds of research in the education system itself in terms of organisation or participation in such programmes. It should also be noted that internships and apprenticeships are more common among youth enrolled in three-year upper-secondary schools than they are among four-year upper-secondary schools or students of higher education ($\chi^2 = 148.54$), which is to be expected given the specific nature of their education. Another factor related to the quality as well as the utility of education in achieving a better living standard and secure employment is youth perception of how easy it will be to find a job after they complete their formal education. When we examine the subsample of respondents who are still in the process of completing their education (N=675), as many as 35 per cent predict that it will be difficult to find a job after their process of formal education is completed; this opinion may be a repercussion of the above-mentioned European Commission data on high jobless rates among young people with degrees from tertiary education. Although attitudes of Croatian young people toward finding jobs after formal education were no different than those of their peers in other countries that participated in the FES research, it should be noted that Croatia, in comparison to the EU countries, had the greatest share of young

people who predicted that it would be very difficult for them to find work after completing their formal education. Despite these views on the quality of education, corruption in education, and the education system being ill-adapted to the labour market, data on mobility in the study indicates that only six per cent of Croatian youth identify education as a main reason to potentially move abroad, and that merely a few have taken concrete steps toward this goal. Thus, five per cent of respondents stated that they had contacted potential schools or universities, while two per cent had secured funding.²⁶

STRESS RELATED TO EDUCATION

School activities and requirements are a common cause of stress among pupils and students: this was evident in the subsample of youth who were still in the process of completing their education. In this respect, only 11 per cent of respondents felt their everyday lives in schools or institutions of higher education to be easy and stress-free. In contrast, as many as 42 described their everyday lives at school and studying as hard and stressful. Taking into account the additional 47 per cent who saw their education-related everyday lives as “hard and stressful to some extent,” Croatian youth appear to view their education as a burden, with only one in nine students experiencing no stress relating to it. Compared to 2012, the share of youth who did not find their education process stressful diminished from 14 per cent to 11 per cent in 2018. The biggest changes were noted in terms of a drop in the percentage of respondents who described their education-related everyday lives as “hard and stressful to some extent” (57 per cent in 2012, compared to 46 per cent in 2018), and the rising share of those who described it as “quite hard and stressful” (22 per cent in 2012, compared to 34 per cent in 2018). Worries about taking tests and getting bad grades were above-average among Croatian students compared to the OECD average, whereas other stress-related aspects (fear of examinations despite being well-prepared; tension when studying for an exam; being nervous when unable to complete a school assignment) were below the OECD average (Braš Roth, Markočić Dekanić and Markuš Sandrić 2017). Accordingly, Croatian youth had the lowest share of “very easy and stress-free” responses among the ten countries participating in this round of research. The next ranking behind Croatia's 11 per cent was Slovenia at 19 per cent of stress-free youth students, whereas all other countries scored above 20 per cent²⁷.

EDUCATION AND SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS

The last research aspect to be discussed here concerns the correlation between socioeconomic status, academic success, and the decision to continue one's education. In this respect, PISA 2015 (Braš Roth, Markočić Dekanić and Markuš Sandrić 2017) high-

lighted the link between underprivileged socioeconomic status and lower levels of personal motivation and ambition among pupils. This was particularly evident in expectations regarding completion of tertiary education. As few as 13 per cent of pupils from underprivileged backgrounds expected to complete their studies at an institution of higher education, as opposed to two-thirds of their counterparts from more privileged backgrounds. Social and economic aspects of families play a role in pupils' academic success, as students from higher-level socioeconomic backgrounds tend to be more successful (Košutić, Puzić and Doolan 2015).

The findings relating to the correlation between socioeconomic background and various educational aspects, such as academic success, are also observable at the level of higher education. The period between 1999 and 2010 thus saw "a major increase in the probability of enrolment success in higher education for children of parents who have completed higher education, accompanied by a drastic decrease in the probability of enrolment in higher education for children whose parents had lower levels of education" (Potočnik 2014: 91). Meanwhile, the number of students in Croatia rose from 91,874 in the 1999–2000 academic year to 148,616 in 2010–2011²⁸.

The results of this round of research were consistent with previous findings, inasmuch as it was possible to compare particular aspects with regard to the questionnaire items examined. The highest education levels were achieved more often by female respondents ($\chi^2=19.89$). Young people whose parents had higher levels of education (mothers' level of education: $\chi^2=203.34$; fathers' level of education: $\chi^2=218.40$) tended to achieve the same themselves, whereas those whose parents had (not) completed lower-secondary education were more likely not to go above that level themselves. Furthermore, differences were noted in educational levels with regard to the household financial situation as well as the number of books that respondents had in their households. Those who could afford a higher standard of living were more likely ($\chi^2=35.38$) to complete tertiary education (35 per cent) than those coming from less privileged material backgrounds, who tended to complete four-year (60 per cent) and three-year upper-secondary schools (27 per cent). Also, respondents who had fewer books at their disposal, which is an indicator of cultural capital, were more likely to complete lower levels of education ($\chi^2=92.73$). These findings are indicative of previously established trends: there is a clear need to level the playing field and enable young people to achieve their desired levels of education (most, in fact, aspire to obtain degrees at the level of higher education) regardless of their socioeconomic background. Such an approach would primarily require well-thought-through mechanisms to enable young people to receive the necessary financial support throughout their education.

6

EMPLOYMENT

KEY FINDINGS

- Most Croatian youth are not employed, and those who are usually have permanent full-time jobs (22 per cent) and work 40-plus-hour weeks (51 per cent of working youth). The greatest number work in their field of education and training (36 per cent), as well as in the private sector (nearly eight-tenths of youth).
- Most youth (93 per cent) believe that they were unable to get the job they desired because of bad grades. When employed, the largest share would prefer to work in the private sector (50 per cent), 41 per cent in the public sector, while the rest would want to work in international or civil society organisations.
- Most youth think that success in finding a job requires connections with powerful people, influential friends, having adequate level of education or expertise, and luck.
- Job elements valued by young people in accepting jobs reflect the current labour market situation: most youth want secure employment, enough free time, and career opportunities, while the least number aspire to work with people and contribute to society.

INTRODUCTION

The growing flexibility of the labour market, conducive to the rise of precarious forms of employment and coupled with the expansion of higher education and increased emigration of youth (Potočnik and Adamović 2018), suggest a need to study young people entering the labour market as a population at risk. Young people face a greater probability that they will change their jobs more frequently than their older colleagues and that they will join the category of underpaid, short-term jobs which might provide them with short-term training programmes at best (Caliendo and Schmidl 2016). According to I. Tomić (2015: 35), the costs of

youth unemployment for individuals and society on the whole can be calculated by distinguishing between individual costs (lower wages, lower chances of long-term employment, lower pensions and a greater frequency of poverty) and social costs, which take “[...] the form of reduced effectiveness of public spending on education and training, erosion of the salary tax base, increased social welfare costs, as well as potential public protests and social unrest, and the so-called brain drain in the form of emigration of higher-education-level youth, which takes a toll on a country’s potential long-term economic growth.” Additionally, the impossibility of making long-term financial plans and moving out of one’s parental home²⁹ affect the quality of life, potentially initiating a vicious circle of poverty and marginality for Croatia’s young population (Potočnik and Spajić Vrkaš 2017).

At the EU level, Croatia ranks low in terms of youth employment at merely 41 per cent of working population between 15 and 29 years of age,³⁰ compared to almost three-quarters in the Netherlands and two-thirds in Austria. Moreover, Croatia ranks a dubious “first” in European in terms of unemployment (with a 22 per cent jobless rate among the 15–29 age population)³¹ together with Greece, Spain, and Italy. The most vulnerable youth subgroup is the so-called NEETs (young people not in employment, education or training), which accounts for exactly one-fifth of Croatian youth between 20 and 24 years of age.³²

The phase when people join the labour market, preceding actual employment, involves things such as job-searching, and tends to be even more stressful for young people than starting actual work; they often remain in this phase for up to a year. According to Eurofound research results (2017), Croatia ranks at the head of the list in terms of negative indicators and time spent searching for a job: long-term unemployment among youth stands at 40 per cent. With regard to finding a job in Croatia and the qualities identified as key to success, Croatian youth tend to rely on their own qualities, that is, the level of their education and training (47 per cent) as often as they rely on intervention by “higher-ups,” i.e., using connections and acquaintances, including

political intervention (44 per cent). Interestingly, in 2012 as few as ten per cent of the participants espoused a fatalistic outlook, believing luck to be the paramount factor in finding a job. The 2012 research also examined reasons for accepting potential job offers, and indicated a clear dominance of extrinsic motivation, as over four-fifths of youth preferred a high income and job security. This preponderance is understandable in the context of the economic crisis, which peaked out in 2012, with as few as 18 per cent of young people claiming an intrinsic motivation of accepting a potential job offer (that is, working with likeable people and job satisfaction).

The economic crisis, which has persisted for a full decade, is having a deep impact on the social position and perspectives of Croatia's population. In this respect, young people tend to be affected by their own, often unfavourable, status, as well as by the status of parental families, which have faced impoverishment along a broad front, with their "rainy-day reserves" having been depleted. This situation increases the risk of youth not becoming a social resource and a link in a successfully functioning system of intergenerational solidarity, but instead becoming a social problem, which could have a long-term, deleterious impact on the development and growth of Croatian society and economy. An aggravating circumstance in this respect is that young people tend to be marginalised rather than targeted by measures to truly better their situation while strengthening their participation in the social, economic, and political spheres.

YOUTH IN THE LABOUR MARKET

Young people have their own specificities when it comes to the labour market and employment. After outlining major tendencies and analysing some of the results achieved by youth in the labour market in the Introduction, this section provides a more detailed analysis of those elements to help us assess how successful young people are in the labour market. As is to be expected, Croatian youth still for the most part remain outside the job market due to their age (Figure 6.1), with only around one-fifth having stable jobs, i.e., permanent contracts. Compared to 2012, when 29 per cent stated that they were working part-time or temporarily, we can conclude that there has been an increase in the number of young people working, be it part-time or full-time.

With regard to their current working status, young people differed in terms of their age ($\chi^2=53.09$), level of education ($\chi^2=68.20$), and level of fathers' education ($\chi^2=62.60$). Completely in line with expectations, the largest share of those in full-time permanent employment was found among the oldest cohort of youth who had completed four-year upper-secondary or higher education. Next, youth with fathers who had attained higher education were least likely to be working at permanent full-time jobs, unlike those whose fathers had lower levels of education and who made up the largest share of permanently employed youth, while respondents whose fathers had completed vocational upper-

secondary education were most likely to engage in temporary work. Youth with fathers who attained higher-education levels were for the most part still pursuing their education, as children of higher-education-level parents made up the greatest share of the student population and were consequently unable to obtain permanent jobs. In terms of the differences among those having permanent jobs, contract-based employment was on average more prevalent among the two younger cohorts, members of who were also more likely to have completed a three-year upper-secondary education. Since they tend to join the job market by their early twenties at the latest, vocationally-trained youth also fulfilled the criteria for permanent employment earlier than their peers. The average active young job-seeker was 19 years old and had the lowest level of education, whereas youth who were not working or looking for work were identified as probable pupils since they tended to come from the youngest subgroup and have the lowest levels of education.

Youth remain off the job market mostly because they are engaged in full-time education; however, there is a group who would like to join the job market but are unable to do so for several reasons. In the section addressing obstacles to employment, our questionnaire featured three multiple-choice questions, with the first response being chosen by 93 per cent of respondents who were unable to obtain their aspired job "because of bad school grades." Next in line was a shortage of appropriate jobs in the geographical region of respondents' schooling (87 per cent), whereas 75 per cent were unable to obtain their desired job because their level of education was too low. In terms of obstacles to employment, young people were identified as a relatively homogenous group since no personal traits were noted as statistically significant in their responses.

Working hours are an element of employment which greatly determines the satisfaction with one's job and the ability to organise other everyday activities in the life of an individual. Figure 6.2 presents data on the average work-week among youth in 2012 and 2018, indicating a significant increase in the number of those working above the average 40-hour week. Differences in average working weeks were noted with respect to fathers' levels of education ($\chi^2=33.19$), where work-weeks of 39 hours or less were most prevalent among youth 19 or younger, and least prevalent among those aged 25–29. The average, 40-hour, working week was most common among youth aged 25–29, and least common among those 19 or younger. Jobs with overtime working hours, with a 41–50-hour working week, were for the most part stated by those 19 or younger, while those working far above the weekly average, i.e. 51 hours or more, came most often from the 25–29 age cohort.

The ability to find a job within one's field of education and training is the next most important element that determines how satisfied individuals are with their jobs. As featured in Figure 6.3, a relatively stable two-fifths of Croatian youth worked in their profession, with a slight rise since 2012 in the number of those whose jobs were close to their profession. In this respect, differences were explained solely by age ($\chi^2=29.15$) and were in the

FIGURE 6.1: The position of youth in the labour market (%)

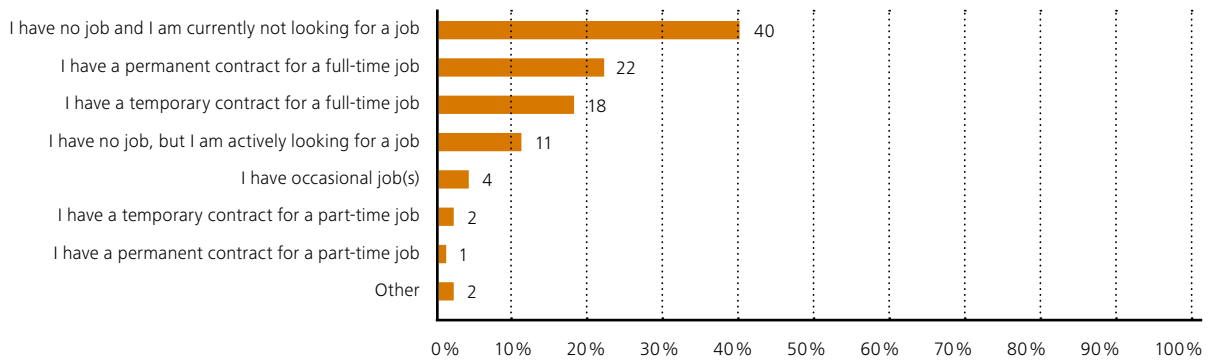


FIGURE 6.2: The average youth working week (%)

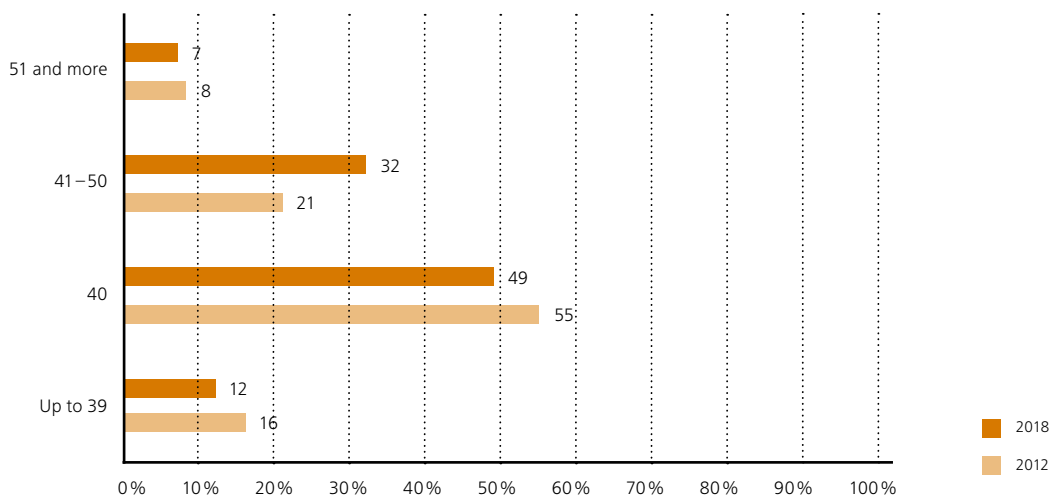
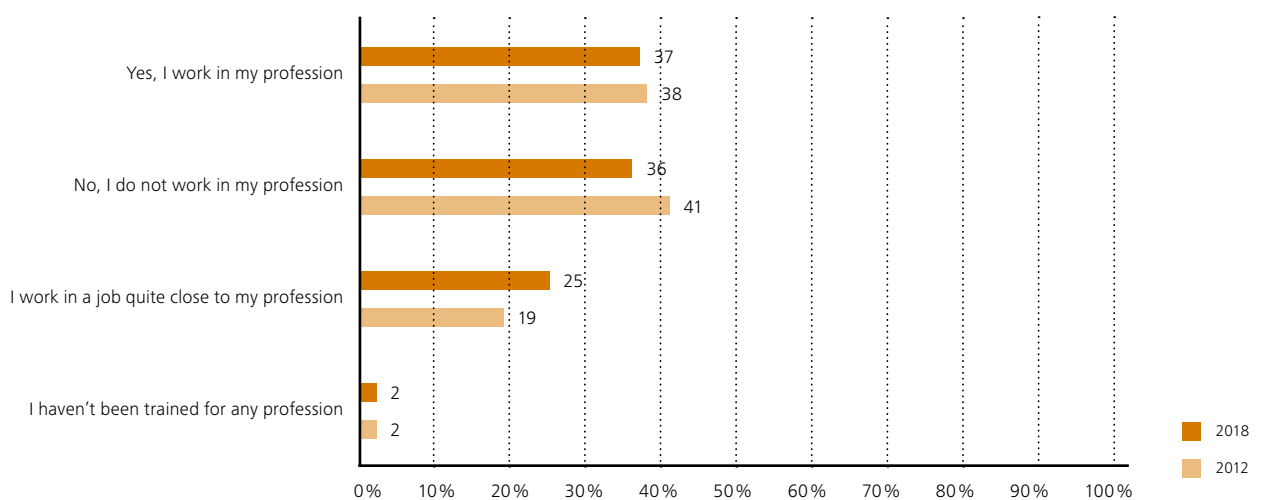


FIGURE 6.3: The share of youth working in their fields of education and training (%)



expected direction. The greatest number of those working in their field of education and training were in the oldest age cohort (25-29), with the lowest number coming from the youngest age cohort (14-19). It is important to note that the 2018 research indicated that 17 per cent of young people had jobs that required a lower level of education than their's, while 80 per cent had jobs that matched their level of education, and three per cent were working at jobs which required a higher level of education. No significant correlation was found between sociodemographic characteristics and the compatibility between respondents' jobs and their levels of education.

Study respondents provided information on sectors of their employment, resulting in an unsurprising pattern: the private sector was dominant with 76 per cent of youth, followed by the public sector with 20 per cent of young people, while other organisations accounted for less than five per cent. Gender ($\chi^2=17.98$) and level of education ($\chi^2=27.24$) explained statistically significant differences, namely that the public sector employed more young women (those with degrees at the higher-education level), whereas the private sector employed a significantly greater number of young men who had completed vocational-education levels.

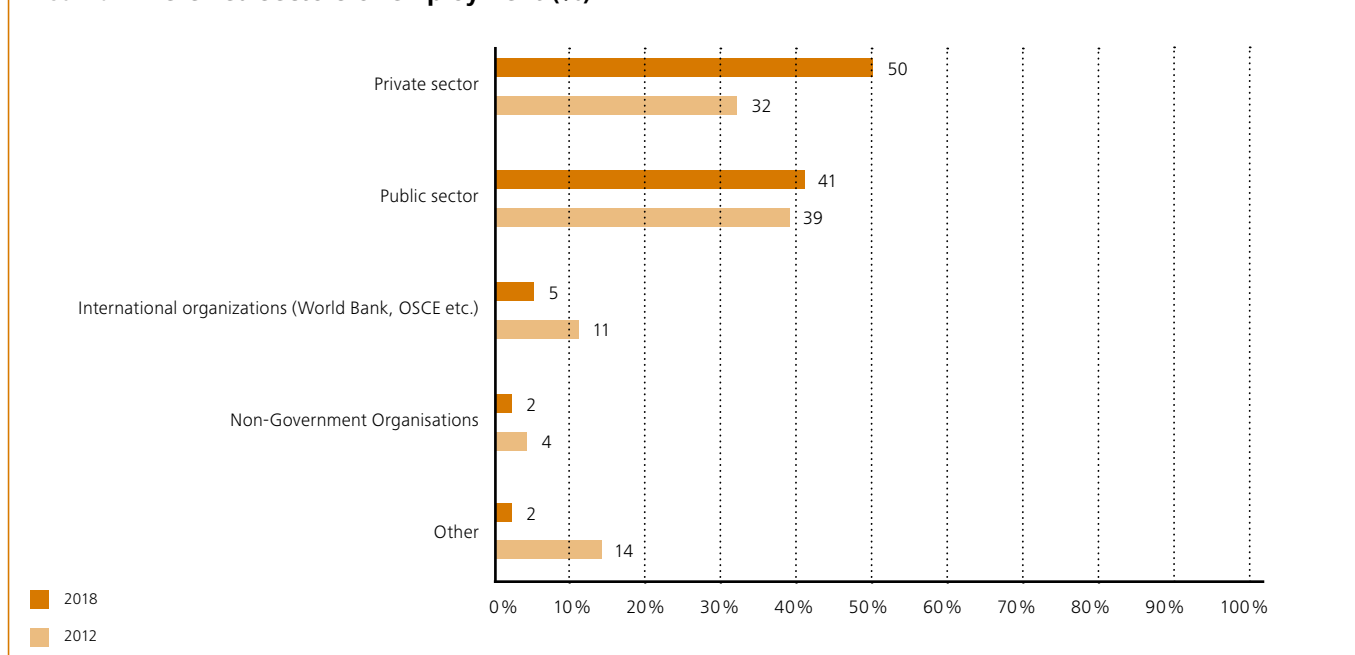
One form of working, albeit unpaid by default, is volunteer work. In this category, seven per cent of study respondents had volunteered in the 12 preceding months, most of them³³ at their school/university (35 per cent), in their sports or musical association (34 per cent) or youth organisation (18 per cent), while ten per cent of youth performing voluntary work had made personal arrangements, i.e. volunteering informally. Compared to the 2012 round of research, numbers of young volunteers dropped by six per cent. Compared to other countries participating in the research, Croatia ranked last in terms of voluntary work by young people in the preceding 12 months.

YOUTH PREFERENCES AND FUTURE IN THE LABOUR MARKET

In terms of employment sector, this round of research confirmed previously identified patterns of youth preferences, finding that the number of youth who wanted to work in the public sector was twice as high as the number of those actually working in that sector, while the number of youth who would prefer to work in the private sector was 30 per cent less than the number of those actually working for private companies. Interestingly, there has been a considerable rise in the share of youth preferring to work in the private sector and a decline in preference for international organisations, whereas the share of those aspiring to work in the public sector has remained at a stable two-fifths (Figure 6.4). Another interesting finding was that the share of respondents undecided about their preferred job sector decreased in the six years between the previous and latest rounds of research, which can be interpreted as an indication of better knowledge of the labour market among youth and a keener awareness of their professional aspirations.

Employment sector preferences were found to correlate significantly with gender ($\chi^2=33.24$), age ($\chi^2=19.09$), level of education ($\chi^2=31.24$), and sector of current employment ($\chi^2=146.12$). In average terms, the public sector was coveted by female respondents in the youngest age cohort with higher education degrees and who were already working in the sector, as the preferred working environment. The private sector was preferred predominantly by male respondents in the oldest age cohort with three-year upper-secondary education, who for the most part were already working in the sector. International organisations were the preferred sector for the 14–19 age cohort with lower levels of education. Previously identified desires to continue working in their current sector can be explained by job satisfaction and

FIGURE 6.4: Preferred sectors of employment (%)



“sector socialisation,” that is, the inclination of youth not to leave their “comfort zone.” Young people formulate their job-seeking strategies depending on how they perceive their employability and the channels available to influence job-application outcomes. It is therefore interesting to attempt an insight into how they value elements which might play a crucial role in finding a job. Consistently with sentiment among the general public, young Croatians attach great importance to elements which might be described as “corrupt behaviour:” finding a job through people in positions of power and through friends and family connections. Only then, albeit with a marginal difference, do young people value expertise and level of education, which are closely followed by “luck.” To put this in concrete terms, 79 per cent of Croatian youth considered it important to have connections with people in power to secure a job, while 78 per cent assigned the same importance to influential friends, 74 per cent to an adequate level of education or expertise, and 72 per cent to luck. In addition, slightly over half (51 per cent) of Croatian youth consider political party membership or international experience to be a ticket to the labour market as well. While there is partial overlapping in the ranking of these elements compared to 2012, it should be noted that the perception of importance of one’s level of education rose by several percentage points, while the perceived importance of “luck” in landing a job jumped considerably to outrank political party membership. The one element that was not included in the 2012 questionnaire – the experience of education or work abroad – was perceived as being important in finding a job by about half of the respondents. The last element in the ranking was regional background, perceived by 34 per cent of youth as a personal trait which might be a limitation (or an advantage) on the job market.

Intriguingly, youth perceptions of how important the above-mentioned factors are in finding a job differ in terms of their fathers’ level of education, with factors being ranked in inverse proportion to the fathers’ education. In other words, young people consider influential friends ($\chi^2=33.42$), luck ($\chi^2=55.71$), connections with people in positions of power ($\chi^2=27.75$), political party membership ($\chi^2=32.18$), and regional background ($\chi^2=26.08$) to decrease in importance the higher their fathers’ level of education. This can be interpreted by the systemic obstacles encountered in their schooling, early life and adolescence, as well as by family experiences which are passed on to children through socialisation. In this respect, obstacles to success, including finding employment, were more strongly perceived by young people with fewer family resources than by those whose resources, consistently with their fathers’ higher levels of education, tended to be more substantial.

The assessment of the expertise component in the questionnaire resulted in a distribution which tended to show that this was more highly valued by young women than young men ($\chi^2=15.32$) and by respondents with lower levels of education ($\chi^2=9.35$). As a facilitating factor in obtaining a job, “luck” ranked similarly ($\chi^2=16.80$): this was most important for youth with vocational education, and least important to young people with four-year

upper-secondary-level education. We can assume that this group mostly comprised students who had not yet had a taste of the job market, i.e., who had not experienced a situation where not being able to find a job would make them consider luck to be a relevant factor. Interestingly, the young population tended to be commensurately homogenous with regard to perceiving education as relevant, as only gender proved to be a differentiating factor ($\chi^2=9.49$), while a greater proportion of young men considered education not to be important in finding a job. As was to be expected, perceptions of international experience as a job factor differed in terms of levels of education ($\chi^2=27.53$) and age ($\chi^2=11.05$): international work and study experience was held in high esteem by the largest share of youth with lower education and those from the youngest age cohort, and by the smallest share of youth with three-year upper-secondary-level education among the oldest cohort.

In the context of youth often facing precarious work options which might further erode their social position, having a choice of employment could be considered a lucky circumstance. The previous round of research identified income/salary as the most desirable job characteristic among Croatian youth, followed by job security, job satisfaction and, finally, working with likeable co-workers. The latest research findings, however, suggest that youth job preferences are influenced by precarious work conditions: close to nine-tenths of respondents named job security as the most desirable job characteristics, followed by having enough leisure time apart from work. However, patterns also emerged which could be related to self-actualisation: eight-tenths of youth aspired to having a job where they would have opportunities to advance and have a sense of achievement, which they found important to accomplish with likeable co-workers. More precisely, the elements most valued by young people in accepting potential employment were as follows: job security (89 per cent), enough free time apart from work (83 per cent), opportunities for advancement/career opportunities (80 per cent), sense of achievement (79 per cent), working in a pleasant environment (78 per cent), income/salary (73 per cent), working with people (65 per cent), and the possibility of doing something valuable for society (62 per cent).

In terms of youth characteristics, the importance assigned to factors relevant to job acceptance differed in several dimensions. First and foremost, respondents assigned less importance to income/salary the higher the level of education among their fathers ($\chi^2=83.80$), which is understandable because young people from better socioeconomic backgrounds feel more secure in relying on their families to meet some of their financial needs if their own means should prove inadequate. Another interesting difference emerged in the perceived importance of working in a pleasant environment, as respondents whose fathers had higher levels of education ($\chi^2=38.35$) found it less relevant to their job preferences; a possible explanation is that youth from this group had developed characteristics and skills more inclined to competitive environments and individualised work.

Young people attached different degrees of importance to working with people in terms of their level of education ($\chi^2=23.70$). Working with people was most commonly desired by youth who had completed three-year upper-secondary-level or higher education, and least common among youth who had completed four-year upper-secondary-level education. The importance of advancement/career opportunities also differed according to levels of education ($\chi^2=29.91$), being slightly more common among higher-education-level respondents. Interestingly enough, a sense of achievement ($\chi^2=31.67$) was most pronounced in youth whose fathers had completed a three-year or four-year upper-secondary-level education, and least pronounced with those whose fathers had a lower-secondary-level education. This can be explained by the fact that young people whose fathers had achieved upper-secondary levels of education had the biggest potential to climb the social ladder, that is, they were the most ambitious in terms of upward social mobility; in contrast, those whose fathers were unable to complete upper-secondary-level education tended to have a bleak outlook and were reluctant to aspire to success.

The importance of doing something valuable for society was mediated by fathers' ($\chi^2=33.07$) as well as respondents' own level of education ($\chi^2=23.29$): it was slightly more prevalent among higher-education-level youth whose fathers had completed a lower-secondary or three-year upper-secondary education, and least prevalent among youth with vocational education levels. The last observed element which might influence acceptance of a job by young people – having enough free time apart from one's work – was mediated solely by respondents' fathers' level of education ($\chi^2=59.56$), with the highest percentage of young people having higher-education-level fathers, and the least importance assigned by those whose fathers had lower-secondary education. A potential interpretation of this finding can be found in the value ascribed to leisure time and the level of development and participation in activities requiring more free time. This is often tied to financial capital, or higher education, which is more accessible to higher-education-level parents and therefore potentially has influence in the formation of young people's aspirations.

7

VALUES

KEY FINDINGS

- The most important value among youth is emancipation, which encompasses the importance of private relations.
- Croatian youth accept nationalism and authoritarianism to a certain degree, and are on average more inclined toward authoritarianism.
- Compared to the 2012 round of research, exclusionary attitudes toward sexual minorities have receded, while national exclusionary attitudes have increased; considerable social distance is still expressed towards homosexuals.
- Despite their concerns or fears regarding immigrants being relatively muted, Croatian youth also seem to be reserved when it comes to Croatia being a country of immigration as well as multicultural. Although almost two-fifths of respondents accept the prospect of Croatian society as multicultural and consider this to be positive, an equal share were nonetheless uncertain as to whether they consider it useful and beneficial for society.
- Generally, young people are likely to justify opportunist behaviour, such as using personal or family connections, which they considered a major factor in achieving social success in Croatian society.

INTRODUCTION

Youth research in Croatia from the late 1990s onwards has identified a relatively stable hierarchy of values, with values relating to the sphere of privacy (the importance of family life and individual autonomy) heading the list, but also values affirming social and professional aspects, like achieving financial security and other means of living a good life and attaining professional success are considered to be fairly important. Following these are values relating to leisure and entertainment, the importance of living according to one's faith, achieving a good standing in society, and

a sense of belonging and loyalty to one's nation. The bottom of the hierarchy is occupied by values associated with participation in the public sphere (political affirmation and media success) (Ilišin and Gvozdanović 2017). Nevertheless, the period between 1999 and 2013 saw mild shifts in the hierarchy of youth values, primarily towards individualism on the one hand, which is consistent with post-materialist tendencies, but also toward materialist, particularly traditionalist, values on the other, which is consistent with the changes in the social-political order and the process of "re-traditionalisation" in contemporary Croatian society (Ilišin and Gvozdanović 2016).

Discussions of value structure and dynamics in Croatian society from the 1990s onwards often problematize the concept of retraditionalisation (Sekulić 2014), which refers to the social process of weakening of modernist value tendencies and concurrent revival of the traditionalist value set. The traditionalist value set is marked by pronounced social conformity, the primacy of the collective (such as family or nation) over the individual, political passivity, a clear division of gender roles, a nationalist outlook, and a strong emphasis on religion (Inglehart and Baker 2000).

The process of retraditionalisation in Croatian society was intensified by the existential insecurity catalysed by the 1991–1995 war of independence (Homeland War) and subsequent economic decline (Županov 1995; Sekulić 2014). The process involved an ethnicity- and religion-based homogenisation of the population in the context of impending threat, ultimately culminating in hostilities (Sekulić 2014). The sense of threat and existential insecurity is the precise social trigger that can somewhat curb internalisation of the (post-) modernist value orientation; however, it does not mean that the level of attained values of emancipation, individualisation, and a critical stance toward hierarchical organisations is being completely eroded. Times of uncertainty and insecurity simply make society more susceptible to traditionalist patterns that provide a sense of structure and order, as well as to what Inglehart refers to as the "authoritarian reflex" (1999), which is conducive to the need for a strong leader. Retraditionalisation

has thus entailed, in an ideal-type sense, a *renewal* of traditionalist values such as increased religiosity and nationalism followed by the political activism of religious elites and “spiritual renewal” (Županov 1995; Sekulić 2011; 2014).

RELIGIOSITY AND RELIGIOUS PRACTICE

Before we present dynamic aspects of religiosity or religious self-identification of Croatian youth, here are some basic data on their confessional identities. Consistently with the general population distribution, Croatian youth predominantly state that they are Roman Catholic (88 per cent), whereas seven per cent claimed to not be affiliated with any religion.³⁴ Although almost 90 per cent of respondents identified themselves as Roman Catholic, two-thirds (69 per cent) stated that they were religious, 22 per cent were undecided, and eight per cent were non-religious³⁵. This suggests that confessional belonging is not necessarily related to, nor does it imply, religiosity, but that being affiliated with Catholicism is understood more as an integral part of one’s cultural – national – identity. The high religiosity of youth is compatible with that of their parents, as 83 per cent of respondents described their parents as religious:³⁶ in this respect, the inter-generational transmission of values is taking place without significant disruption, at least in terms of religiosity.

Fewer respondents practised their religion than identified themselves as Catholic and religious. Almost half the respondents stated that God was important in their lives, and 44 per cent attended mass once a month or more. The religiosity scale correlated significantly with gender, social competences and social background.³⁷ In this respect, female respondents ($t=5.73$), respondents with lower-secondary-level education ($F\text{-ratio}=11.88$), and respondents whose fathers had the lowest levels of education ($F\text{-ratio}=5.21$) expressed significantly higher levels of religiosity.

PERSONAL VALUES

Assigning various levels of importance to particular (life) goals and aspirations is an indicator of value hierarchy, and the structure of these values reveals the value orientations of youth. In this respect, the values of Croatian youth predominantly exhibited elements of an emancipatory value set, such as independence, loyalty to friends and partners, assuming responsibility, and having a successful career (Figure 7.1). In addition, the hierarchy of values was headed by childrearing aspirations, which are part of the traditionalist matrix and an element of the materialist value orientation such as appearance (having good looks).

Ranked at the bottom of the values scale were various types of public and social affirmation such as participating in citizens’ initiatives and political engagement, which were deemed important by 25 and 15 per cent of youth, respectively. The variables

assessed were grouped into four factors.³⁸ The first factor can be described as *emancipatory-relational*, since it comprises elements like independence, responsibility and a successful career, but also the importance of quality relations in one’s inner circle (friends and partners), which given the fact that it implies the importance of privacy and close relations within primary groups could conceptually belong to the traditionalist matrix as well. The second factor is that of *family traditionalism*, which includes aspirations toward marriage and children. The remaining two factors refer to the relevance of *socio-political activity* and *materialism and status symbols*. In this respect, the largest share of respondents expressed emancipatory-relational values ($M=4.3$), followed by those of family traditionalism ($M=4$) and materialism ($M=3.6$). Consistent with research to date on youth values (Ilišin and Gvozdanović 2017), socio-political activity was on average irrelevant to Croatia’s youth ($M=2.7$)³⁹. Traditionalist (family) values were more important to female respondents ($t=4.41$), religious respondents ($F\text{-ratio}=62.62$), and those from a lower social status (fathers with a three-year upper-secondary-level vocational education) ($F\text{-ratio}=5.78$). Endorsement of material values wanes with maturation. Thus, the youngest cohort (14-19 years of age) ($F\text{-ratio}=26.46$) and the lowest-educated respondents ($F\text{-ratio}=9.15$) were significantly more inclined to material values, as were those who identified themselves as religiously undecided in contrast to non-religious respondents ($F\text{-ratio}=12.31$). Higher-education-level youth were far more inclined toward the dimension of socio-political activity, as opposed to respondents who had completed three-year upper-secondary-level education ($F\text{-ratio}=14.44$).

Furthermore, psychological categories of feeling concerned or worried about certain (negative) things or phenomena may imply the relevance of social factors which may remove those concerns (e.g. worry expressed about poverty might imply that a respondent highly values, or has a need for, material security).

Generally speaking, respondents expressed some level of concern regarding all the phenomena featured in the questionnaire (Figure 7.2), and a majority of respondents worried about threats at the microsocial level: existential (in)security, in the material sense as well as health wise. For example, slightly more than half the respondents were very concerned about not being able to get a job (53 per cent), which is unsurprising given that unemployment, especially long-term, implies not only financial insecurity, but a hindrance to social integration and affirmation. If we look back to the value that young people found most important at the individual level – independence – it comes as no surprise that their biggest worry is the potential lack of access to the precondition for independence, namely having a job. Serious health problems, which were a significant concern for slightly less than half of Croatia’s youth (45 per cent), portend similarly negative repercussions for youth independence. Following these, the ranking was dominated by fears relating to the macrosocial level, that is, social phenomena such as social justice, increased poverty, pollution, and corruption, all of which were moderate concerns for the majority of respondents (37-44 per cent). One-third of youth were very

FIGURE 7.1: Youth values ranking: very important and important (%)

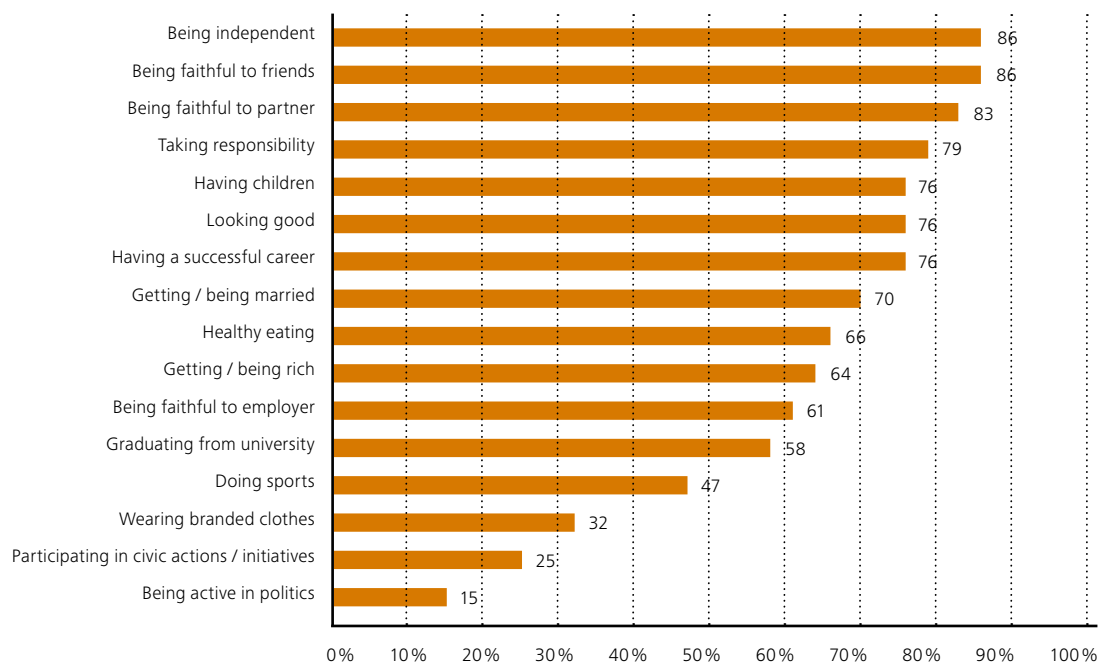
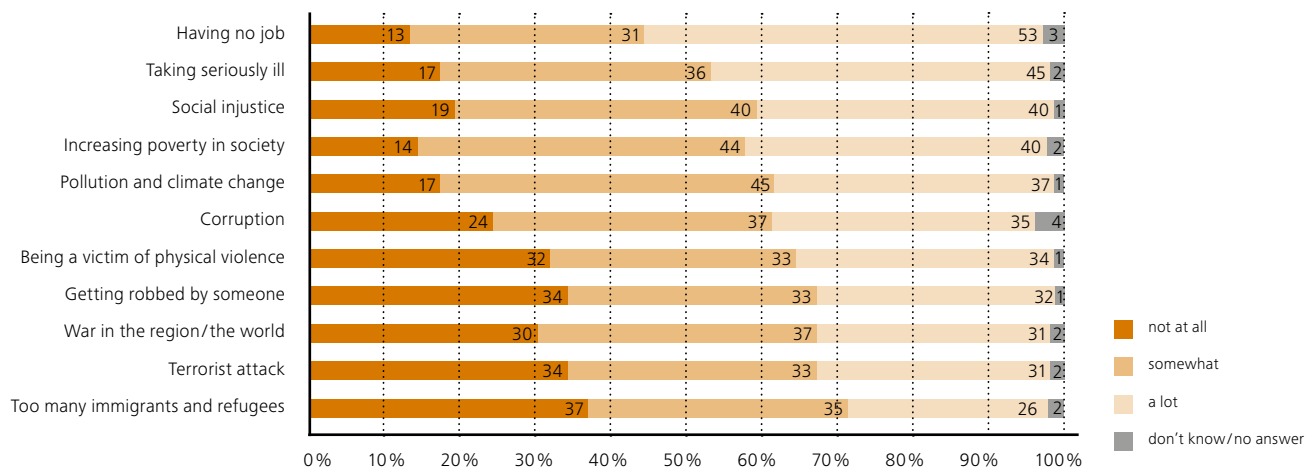


FIGURE 7.2: Youth concerns regarding particular life situations and social phenomena (microsocial and macrosocial concerns) (%)



concerned about negative situations at the microsocial level, such as being a victim of physical violence or robbery. With slightly less intensity, a relatively high share of youth were still concerned about a potential war breaking out (37 per cent) and terrorism (33 per cent). On the other hand, a relative majority (37 per cent) were least concerned about too many immigrants and refugees.

The variables assessed were formed along two latent dimensions,⁴⁰ both of which comprised a combination of concerns relating to both social levels. The first factor was thus related to *a fear of various forms of violence*, and the second to *a fear of socioeconomic decline*,⁴¹ with the latter being slightly more pronounced.⁴² From the perspective of needs, the respondents could be said to acknowledge the importance of (physical) safety, their own as well as for society in general, but also the importance of

social justice and economic security. Female respondents, low-est-educated respondents, and religious respondents expressed significantly more concern regarding the first dimension of violence ($t=3.46$; $F\text{-ratio}=11.58$; $F\text{-ratio}=10.34$), whereas the second dimension of fear of socioeconomic decline was significantly correlated with the respondents' degree of maturation, thus meaning the oldest age cohort (25-29) ($F\text{-ratio}=9.22$), but also those with degrees at the level of higher education ($F\text{-ratio}=9.17$) and those with fathers who had attained higher education ($F\text{-ratio}=4.35$) were more intensely concerned by such negative social processes and phenomena⁴³.

In terms of how they perceived their future, youth tended toward optimism: 64 per cent believed that their lives would improve ten years down the line, whereas 25 per cent did not believe

that the future held any significant changes for the better or worse in store. Two per cent were pessimistic about their future, and eight per cent had no idea on the matter. Compared to the previous round of research in 2012, personal optimism seems to have dropped by slightly over ten per cent, prolonging the downward trend among Croatian youth (Ilišin and Spajčić Vrkaš 2017). Interestingly, the last five-year period did not see an increase in personal pessimism, but a rise in the share of youth who believed their future would be the same as their present (from 14 to 25 per cent). With regard to their future, young people were differentiated in terms of age and their fathers' level of education. Namely, the oldest age cohort (25–29) were significantly less optimistic ($\chi^2=13.26$) than the younger cohorts (14–19 and 20–24 years of age), while a cautious attitude of expecting their future to be no different from their present was common among respondents with tertiary-educated fathers ($\chi^2=14.42$)⁴⁴.

In sum total, it can be said that a lower socioeconomic status of one's family contributes to general dissatisfaction with life, but does not dampen positive expectations regarding one's future: on the contrary, personal optimism was significantly more frequent among respondents with fathers at the lowest educational level.

SOCIAL VALUES: ATTITUDES TO "OTHERS"

National distance is an indicator of exclusionary nationalist attitudes, which are, in turn, an element of nationalist values, and hence of a traditionalist value orientation (Sekulić 2014). Respondents were asked to state to which extent they would accept particular social and ethnic groups as neighbours (Figure 7.3). The majority of Croatian youth were willing to accept a retired couple (72 per cent), a group of students (72 per cent), a local family with many children (64 per cent), and a family from Western Europe (60 per cent).

On the other hand, around two-fifths (37 per cent) would accept homosexual persons or couples as neighbours, 29 per cent would accept refugees, and 16 per cent would accept a Roma

family. Exclusionary attitudes were highest toward ex-convicts and drug addicts, with no more than nine per cent of respondents claiming they would accept them as neighbours. Compared to the 2012 round of research,⁴⁵ the intention and direction of attitudes has shifted somewhat, but not in a one-dimensional way: while tolerance toward homosexuals has improved, it has diminished when it comes to Roma people,⁴⁶ which could suggest a trend toward a simultaneous rise in acceptance of exclusive attitudes towards national minorities and a decline in exclusive attitudes toward sexual minorities.

Variables were structured into two factors,⁴⁷ the first being *socially unmarginised groups*,⁴⁸ or unstigmatised groups, and the second comprising various *marginalised groups*. On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 indicating the least, and 5 indicating the highest level of acceptance), the average value on the scale of acceptance of outgroups was 3.9, whereas the average value for marginalised groups was 2.3, clearly demonstrating the difference in the average level of acceptance (or lack of acceptance) of these groups. In this respect, Croatian youth differed in terms of their level of religiosity (F-ratio=18.48), with religious respondents expressing a significantly higher level of exclusionary attitudes than those who identified themselves as religiously undecided or nonreligious. This is in line with theoretical expectations as well as existing empirical confirmations that exclusionary attitudes towards socially marginalised groups were related to religiosity.

As an element of traditionalism, authoritarianism represents a model for organising the social life of a community by relying on the mutual interaction of three close categories of behaviours and attitudes: submission (to socially established and legitimate authorities), aggression (the intent to "subjugate" others and those with different backgrounds psychologically or physically on the basis of authority), and conventionalism (behaviour rooted in authority-established practices) (Radkiewicz 2015, after Altemeyer 1981). The inclination toward authoritarianism, measured by researchers using various so-called F-scales, is often used as an indicator of prevalence of traditionalist values. Since the arithmetic mean of the measured F-scale⁴⁹ on the Likert five-point scale was 3.2, the intensity and direction of attitudes toward assessed

FIGURE 7.3: **Accepting ranking of various social groups as potential neighbours (%)**

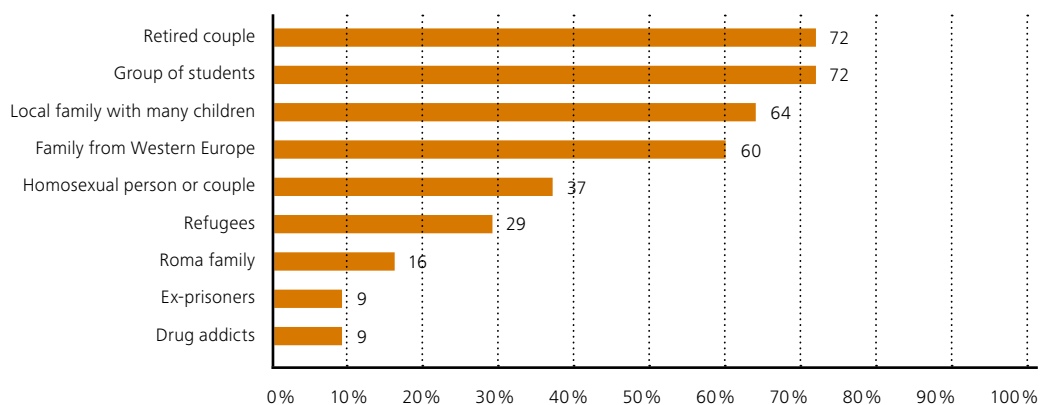
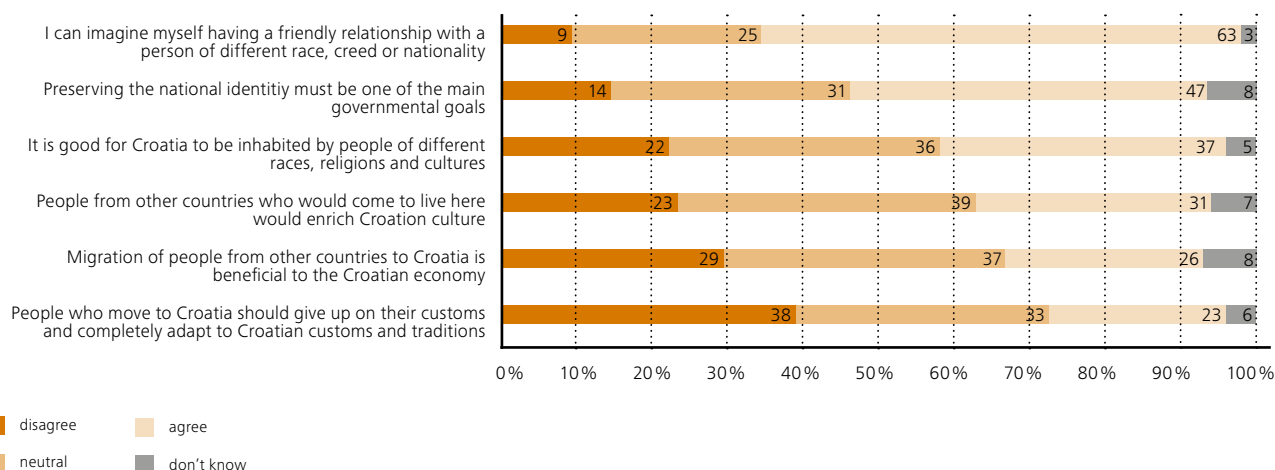


FIGURE 7.4: Youth attitudes toward immigrants (%)



aspects of authoritarianism among Croatian youth could be described as moderate with a tendency toward acceptance, and were especially pronounced in the variable of propensity toward authoritarianism ($M=3.5$). The authoritarianism scale correlated significantly with the respondents' level of education ($F\text{-ratio}=7.69$), fathers' level of education ($F\text{-ratio}=5.77$), and religious self-identification ($F\text{-ratio}=12.22$). As was to be expected, the acceptance of authoritarianism decreased in a linear fashion the higher the level of education of both respondents and their fathers. On the other hand, authoritarianism was considerably more prevalent among religious respondents than those who identified themselves as nonreligious and undecided.

Despite these moderate tendencies toward authoritarianism among Croatian youth, the same cannot be said about the nationalist value orientation. Thus, the average value of the nationalism scale,⁵⁰ which measured to what extent young people were likely to view national belonging through the essentialism prism which prioritises the criterion of origin (ancestry, place of birth, etc.) (Columbus 2006) on a scale from 1 to 5 (1 indicating the least, and 5 indicating the highest level of acceptance), was 2.9, which is a moderate acceptance significantly lower than the acceptance of authoritarianism ($t=14.27$). Nevertheless, it should be noted that Croatia's youth moderately agreed with the statement that non-Croats living in Croatia ought to adopt Croatian customs and values ($M=3.3$). As was the case with authoritarianism, the level of education ($F\text{-ratio}=5.40$) and religious self-identification ($F\text{-ratio}=20.14$) were found to significantly correlate with nationalism, and respondents with higher levels of education who identified themselves as non-religious were considerably less likely to espouse this value orientation.

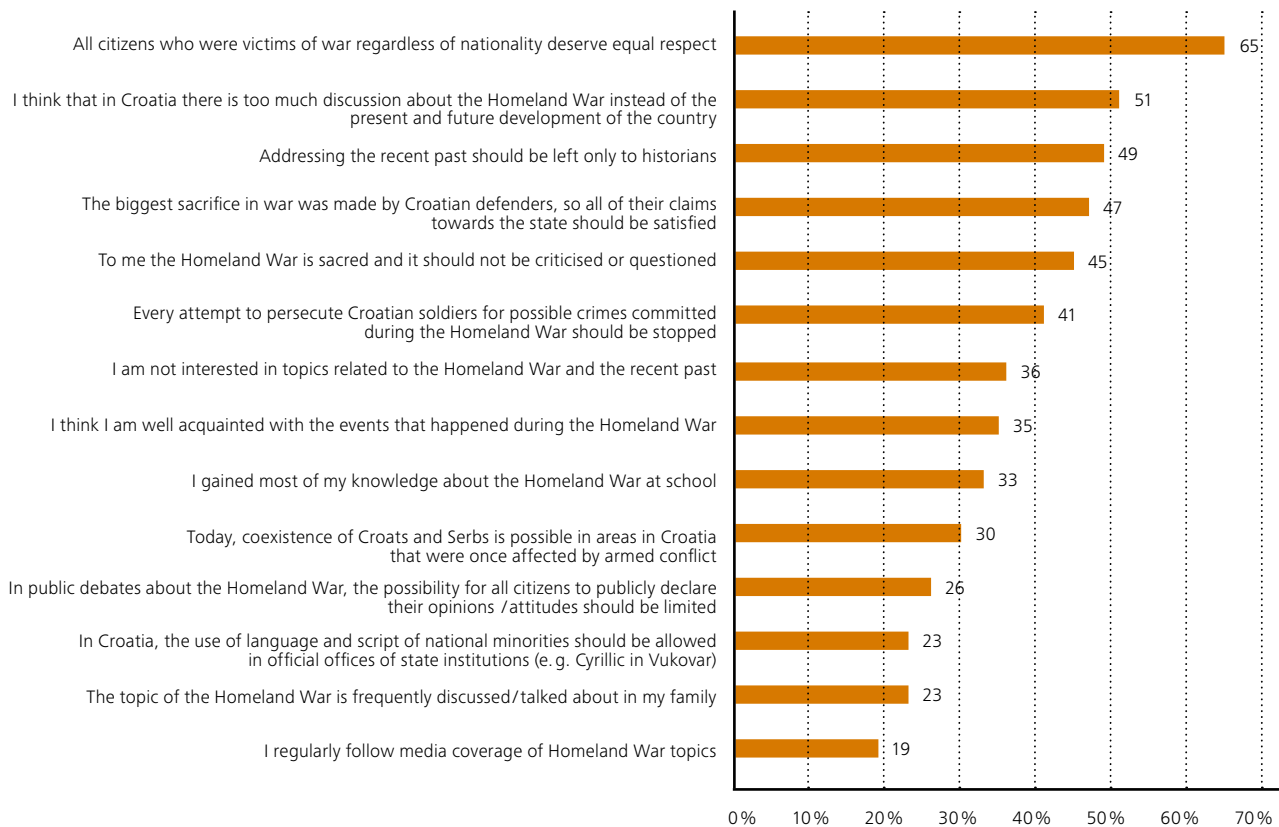
Despite the fact that Croatian youth, as described above, expressed relatively muted concerns or fears with regard to migrants or refugees coming to Croatia (compared to other phenomena listed in the questionnaire), they could also be described as reserved or not having a clearly formulated attitude regarding Croatia as a country of immigration as well as multicultural (Figure 7.4). With

almost two-fifths of the respondents accepting the potential for multiculturalism of Croatian society and considering it to be a good thing, an equal share of respondents were nonetheless uncertain of how useful and beneficial it would be for society. This was corroborated by the finding that almost two-fifths of participants were uncertain about the contribution of potential immigrants to Croatian society, both economically and culturally. Moreover, Croatian youth were rather protective of their cultural identity, seeing that every other respondent was of the opinion that fostering national identity should be a major political focus of the government. Still, in terms of attitudes toward foreigners or immigrants, a relative majority (almost 40 per cent) did not consider assimilation to be a propitious path toward social integration, while a third remained undecided. Forming close relationships with people having different social traits was an idea that young Croatians could imagine (63 per cent), all the more so with existing data finding that 60 and 70 per cent, respectively, had friends from different ethnic and religious backgrounds.

These statements were used to specify two factors:⁵¹ the first was *accepting multiculturalism*,⁵² and the second was *accepting cultural conservatism*. Both factors had similarly equal mean arithmetic values ($M=3.1$ and $M=3.2$) on a scale from 1 to 5 (with 1 indicating the least, and 5 indicating the highest level of acceptance), with the cultural conservatism value being slightly higher, but not high enough to be statistically significant. In other words, Croatian youth were equally likely to accept both attitudes toward immigrants, which might suggest a potential value polarisation on this subject. Acceptance of multiculturalism increases in tandem with the level of fathers' education ($F\text{-ratio}=3.94$), and identification of oneself as non-religious ($F\text{-ratio}=21.15$), with cultural conservatism being considerably more prevalent among the youngest cohort (14-19 years of age) ($F\text{-ratio}=7.76$), respondents with the lowest levels of education ($F\text{-ratio}=5.67$), and those who identified themselves as religiously undecided and religious ($F\text{-ratio}=12.23$).

Furthermore, the questionnaire assessed whether and to what extent the respondents had themselves been discriminated

FIGURE 7.5: Youth attitudes toward the Homeland War: “agree” and “strongly agree” (%)



against on the basis of one of their social characteristics. According to their self-assessment, the majority had not been victims of discrimination based on their social and identity traits. In the cases of those who had, discrimination for the most part targeted their social (structural), and after this, their sociocultural characteristics⁵³.

ATTITUDES TOWARD THE RECENT PAST

Croatia's war of independence, or Homeland War (its official name), had a profound impact on virtually every aspect of society, including the value structure and dynamics of Croatian society in its entirety. In addition to ethnic homogenisation, the war fuelled a strong reservoir of nationalism in the sphere of values, comprising antagonist attitudes toward the ethnic Serb minority in the country (Sekulić 2014). Also, the predominant public, as well as official, narrative⁵⁴ describing the events of the 1990s war had a massive influence on how the Croatian national identity was shaped (Figure 7.5).

First and foremost, the youth population primarily espoused empathy for citizens who were civilian victims of hostilities (65 per cent). Second, every other respondent thought that public discourse was more or less inundated with content related to the Homeland War and that evoking the past should be displaced

by public discussions on the future of Croatia's society. Also, almost half the respondents agreed with yet another attitude present among the public, which is that the recent past ought to be relegated to the discipline of history. Next, almost as many youth (47 per cent) were “protective” and uncritical of the war period and its actors, and of the opinion that all war veterans' demands should be met (by the government) because of their contribution to the founding of the country (Jović 2017), but also that there should be no critical examination of the Homeland War events (45 per cent). Related to this, it comes as no surprise that a high share of study participants (two-fifths) rejected the idea of investigating war crimes committed by members of the Croatian army, which implies that a considerable portion of respondents consider equality before the law to be a relative concept. Similarly, one-fifth supported the idea of censorship or limiting freedom of speech in public debates associated with the Homeland War.

On the other hand, 36 per cent of respondents expressed a lack of interest in the subject of the Homeland War and the country's recent past, with almost as many (35 per cent) considering themselves well-acquainted with events from this period, and a third stating that most of their knowledge of the subject was acquired in their education process. Knowledge and information on various subjects were acquired from close relationships as well: slightly less than a quarter of respondents (23 per cent) discussed the Homeland War with their families. Nevertheless, young peo-

ple's use of media sources to get information on this subject was fairly irregular, given that only 19 per cent were habitual followers of media coverage of topics relating to the Homeland War. The idea that Croats and Serbs could now live together in what used to be war-torn areas was espoused by less than a third of respondents (30 per cent), with less than one-fourth (23 per cent) supporting national minority rights to use their own alphabet and language on official institutional premises.

Factoring resulted in two latent dimensions⁵⁵, which were formed on the basis of the most saturated variables: *uncritical attitudes toward the Homeland War* and *deflection from subjects related to the Homeland War*, with, on average, a higher statistically significant acceptance of the former (M1=3.1 and M2=3.0; $t=3.58$) on a scale from 1 to 5 (1 – “completely disagree,” 5 – “completely agree”). Interestingly, the first dimension was constituted by a set that correlated the uncritical attitude with a higher self-assessment of knowledge, habitual following of media information, and more frequent family conversations regarding the subject of the Homeland War, but also with respect for all civilian victims of war, regardless of nationality/ethnicity. Although the correlation of the latter variable with a refusal to critically examine Homeland War events (and consequently war crimes) could be interpreted as a contradiction, it is not necessarily the case: a possible explanation is that a segment of the youth population perceives or understands civilian victims as resulting almost exclusively from actions of the enemy. The acceptance of this factor decreases linearly with the level of education of respondents (F-ratio=13.12) as well as that of their fathers (F-ratio=10.85), and increases with the level of religiosity (F-ratio=47.1). The latter factor represents a commensurate lack of interest in subjects related to the country's recent past, which correlates with the acquisition of such knowledge during one's education, but also with sociocultural tolerance. Similarly to the previous factor, acceptance of the latter significantly correlated with educational status and religiosity, but in the opposite direction. Thus, this set of attitudes was more espoused by respondents having upper-secondary and higher levels of education (F-ratio=7.67) whose fathers had the same levels of education (F-ratio=5.62) and who were non-religious or religiously undecided (F-ratio=58.66) than among respondents who had completed three-year vocational upper-secondary-level education, had fathers with the same level of education, and identified themselves as religious.

CIVILITY AND TRUST

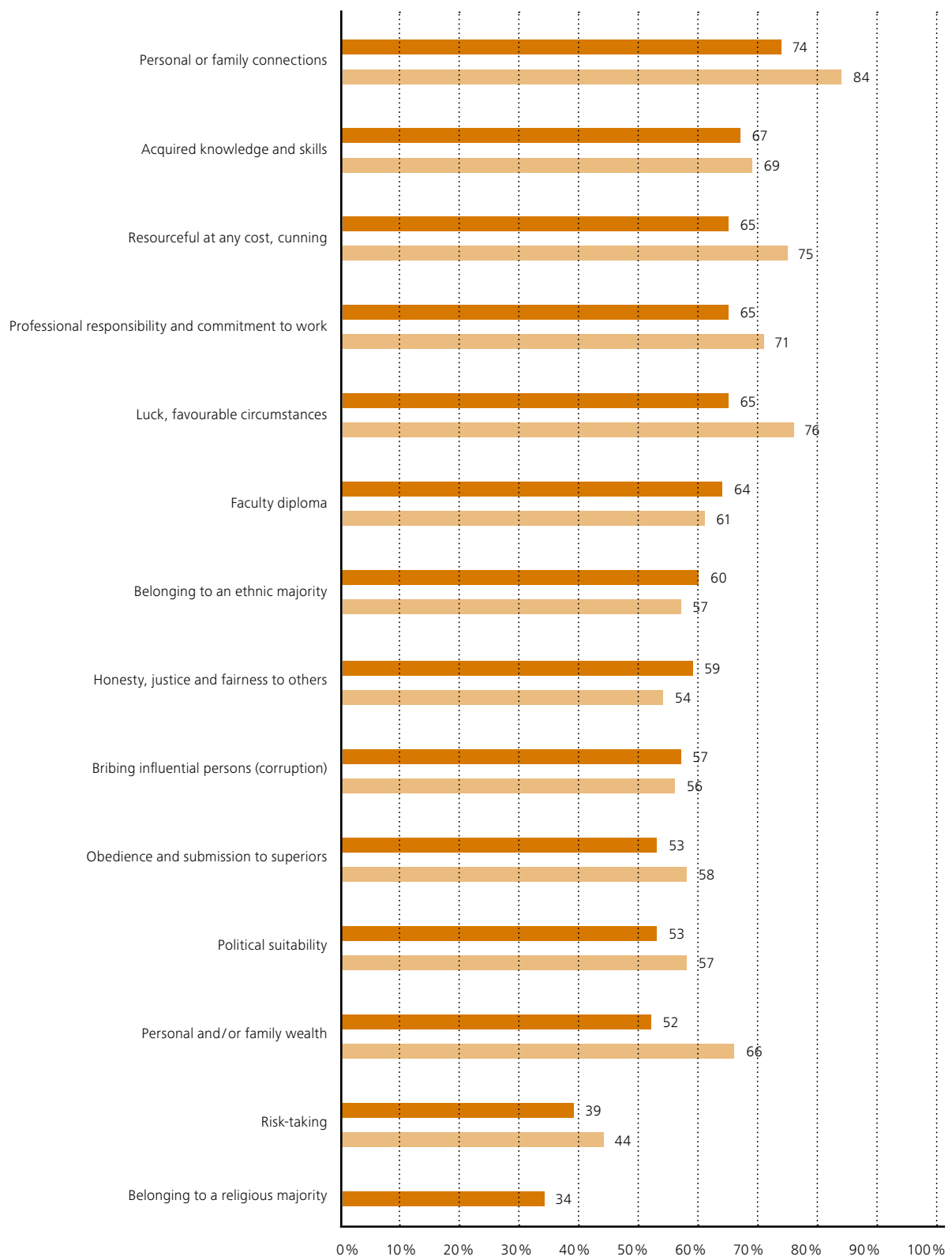
Civility comprises norms that govern social behaviour in general, emphasising the dimension of “self-regulation” or restraint from actions which might bring short-term benefits or pleasure to the individual (Billante and Saunders 2002). Restraint from actions at the expense of others and with the goal of fulfilling one's own interests has positive implications on the social scale, as widespread civility encourages the establishment of social

relations that surpass primary groups. A decline in civil norms in society gives rise to opportunism, or the rule of short-sighted or pure self-interest impervious to ethical examinations (Elster 2007). Along these lines, this study examined to what extent respondents would consider certain behaviour, uncivil and liberal alike, justified on a ten-point scale (from 1 – “never justified,” to 10 – “always justified”). In this respect, the likelihood of justifying the use of connections to get a job (M=5.8) and to get things done more quickly (M=5.7) was average among Croatian youth. On the other hand, respondents were more critical of tax fraud (M=3.5), and giving and accepting bribe (M=3.3), meaning that these were socially less acceptable than using one's connections for one's personal gain. The average value of justifying abortion and homosexuality registered centrally on the scale, with a (mild) tendency towards the positive, justifying pole (M1=5.3, M2=5.1).

Factoring resulted in two dimensions.⁵⁶ The first comprised the justification of uncivil or opportunist types of behaviour (tax fraud, using connections to find employment or get things done): in this respect, respondents differed in terms of religiosity, with those who identified themselves as religiously undecided or uncertain (F-ratio=20.82) being significantly more likely to justify such behaviour than religious respondents. The second dimension was an indicator of the level of justification of liberal or conservative values, depending on the pole of justifying or not justifying homosexuality and abortion. The liberal stance toward homosexuality and abortion was more prevalent among female respondents ($t=3.55$), those who self-identified as non-religious (F-ratio=60.47), and those who had obtained degrees in higher education (F-ratio=9.81), as opposed to a significantly lower support for such types of behaviour found among respondents with lowest-educated fathers (F-ratio=6.78).

In addition to examining to what extent Croatian youth were supportive of (un)civil types of behaviour, it was important to detect their perception of how widespread and accepted these types of behaviour were in Croatian society. In other words, the extent to which certain characteristics or attributes are perceived as desirable for success says a lot about the hierarchy of instrumental values in Croatia (Figure 7.6). Initially, virtually all assessed factors could be described as important for success in Croatian society according to the young population. However, the majority of respondents (74 per cent) considered the use of personal and family connections⁵⁷ as important to success, followed by one's acquired knowledge and skills (67 per cent), indicating that education was perceived as a consequential channel of social promotion. Third place was shared by three factors of success (65 per cent): resourcefulness and cunning, reflecting the perception of the importance of a kind of opportunism, followed by professional responsibility and commitment to work as an indicator of a meritocratic value of success, and finally luck and favourable conditions, suggesting a widespread belief that uncontrollable circumstances and opportunities determined an individual's social success.

FIGURE 7.6: A comparative chart of success factors in Croatian society: "important" and "very important", 2013 and 2018 (%)



The factor structure⁵⁸ of assessed variables was three-dimensional: the first factor could be named *majority group belonging and material resources possession*, the second *personal competences*, and the third *uncivil behaviours*. Average values of constructed scales suggest that, on a scale from 1 to 5 (1 – “not at all important,” 5 – “very important”), respondents assigned the greatest importance to personal competences (M=3.8), followed by uncivil behaviours (M=3.6), with the average value of the personal competences factor significantly more accepted than the uncivil behaviour factor ($t=-8.77$)⁵⁹.

The widespread nature of uncivil types of behaviour, or even the very perception of how widespread they are, has negative effects on the economic development of society, but also gives rise to a lack of trust, both of which weaken the potential for successful cooperation between members of society on an individual level, which is a precondition for social and economic progress. On a scale from 1 to 5 (1 representing the least, and 5 the highest, level of trust), the people that youth trust the most are their family (M=4.6), friends (M=4.2), relatives (M=4), and class-

mates or co-workers (M=3.6). A moderate level of trust was expressed toward people of different nationalities/ethnicities (M=3.3), different religions (M=3.3), followed by neighbours (M=3.2), and finally people with different political convictions (M=3.1). The least amount of trust was placed in political leaders (M=2), who also registered as the only category in the zone of distrust.⁶⁰ The structure of trust was two-dimensional:⁶¹ the first factor comprised variables of trust toward social groups outside the circle of primary family and friends and could therefore be named *social trust*;⁶² the second factor, *particular trust*, comprised variables of respondents' attitudes toward their circle of family and friends. Social trust was significantly more present among respondents who identified themselves as nonreligious and undecided compared to religious individuals (F-ratio=19.61), followed by respondents who had completed a four-year upper-secondary education compared to those with lower levels of education (F-ratio=11.06). A similar differentiation was observed in terms of fathers' levels of education (F-ratio=6.27): respondents with lowest-educated fathers expressed significantly lower levels of social trust.

8

POLITICS AND THE EUROPEAN UNION

KEY FINDINGS

- Croatian youth express a consistent lack of interest in politics: most respondents did not discuss politics with their families, friends, or acquaintances, judging that they did not possess enough political knowledge. Despite the fact that an increasing number of youth use the Internet to keep up with political affairs, their dominant source of information is still television, suggesting that it might be the most influential medium in shaping political attitudes and orientations
- A considerable democratic deficit is present among Croatian youth, corroborated by their political values and political participation. Namely, the majority of young people support democracy as a good form of government, but a considerable share also accept authoritarian rule. This selective acceptance of liberal-democratic values suggests an insufficient understanding of democratic principles and rules, also accompanied by widespread xenophobic attitudes toward immigrants and refugees. On the other hand, political participation of youth is at a commensurately low level, as is their willingness to become more politically active. In this respect, formal political participation is more widespread in some dimensions (such as election turnout) than informal participation, as the majority of Croatian youth have not participated in citizen-led activities
- Three-quarters of Croatian youth want more opportunities to have their voices heard in the political arena, while two-fifths do not think that their generation has enough rights, and as few as one-tenth consider youth interests to be well represented in politics. These observations notwithstanding, four-fifths of young respondents stated that they were not willing to take on any political function
- Croatian youth place the highest level of trust in repressive institutions (armed forces and the police), and the lowest level of trust in local and national government and political parties. Accordingly, they are mostly dissatisfied with the condition of democracy in the country, and do not expect the economy to improve in the following ten years
- The majority of youth consider the European Union to be superior to Croatia with regard to democratic values (with the exception of security). Despite not perceiving any positive political and economic effects of the country's European integration, two-thirds of respondents were of the opinion that Croatia should not leave the EU.

INTRODUCTION

The multidimensional and complex nature of the relationship of youth toward politics expectedly results in a variety of theoretical approaches in researching the phenomenon. One of the most common approaches is based on the concept of political culture, understood as the “cognitive, affective, and evaluative orientations toward the political system in general, its input and output aspects, and the self as political actor” (Almond and Verba 1989: 17). Furthermore, political culture is neither static nor universal, as changes in sociohistorical circumstances cause certain dimensions of the political culture to change in turn, meaning that particular qualities of each individual society and political system help shape the political culture (Inglehart and Welzel 2005; DeBardeleben and Pammatt 2009; Sloam 2013).

Studies of citizens' attitudes toward politics in developed democracies over the past few decades have identified the emergence of phenomena assigned various names, such as political

saturation, passivity, alienation, apathy, disillusionment, scepticism, cynicism and/or a critical disposition in citizens; what these have in common is the distancing of citizens from politics, primarily in its institutional forms (Norris 2011; Amna and Ekman 2013; Grasso 2016). More precisely, research findings on political participation in institutional (formal, traditional, conventional) politics have shown a decline in participation among all citizens in recent decades; within this trend, the decline of youth participation is especially salient, both in comparison with older segments of the population and with former generations of youth (Norris 2003; Forbrig 2005; Fahmy 2006; Quintelier 2007; Marien et al. 2010; Furlong and Cartmel 2012; Sloam 2013; Grasso 2016). Main indicators of the downward trend in the political participation of citizens – including youth – in contemporary democracies are primarily the long-term decline in youth election turnout and political party membership, often accompanied by a growing distrust in political institutions. Additional indicators have been identified among youth in terms of their lower interest in politics, lower levels of political knowledge, less frequent party identification, and an even more widespread distrust of political institutions and actors (Forbrig 2005; Marsh et al. 2007; Kestilä-Kekkonen 2009; Dalton 2011; Albacete 2014). The distancing of young people from institutional politics is identified as a consequence of broad and deep social transformations, reflected through changes in the sphere of politics and in the process of youth socialisation, as well as their reaction to the way that political institutions and actors function, particularly in terms of how responsive they are to the interests and needs of youth⁶³.

No differences were noted between the political tendencies of youth in transition countries and those in established democracies; however, comparative analyses have shown that institutional and non-institutional political participation of youth from post-socialist countries was notably lower than that of their Western-European peers (Cammaerts et al. 2015; Kovačić and Dolenc 2018). These findings also hold true when it comes to the political engagement of Croatian youth, as most indicators of political culture place them in line with their peers in other transition countries in southeast Europe. However, aspects of Croatian youth setting them off from their peers included the lowest level of participation in voluntary activities, the greatest satisfaction with the functioning of democracy in their country, and the least satisfaction with their generational representation in domestic politics and their personal influence on national and local politics (Hurrelmann and Weichert 2015). Croatian youth are also characterised by lower political participation in comparison to young generations in the socialist period, confirming the collapse of youth engagement after the shift in the social-political order (Ilišin and Radin 2002). Intergenerational differences also emerge, as young people are more reluctant to engage in politics and vote than older generations, less inclined to affiliate with or join a political party, more reluctant to accept democratic values, and express less trust in social and political institutions (Ilišin 1999, 2007b).

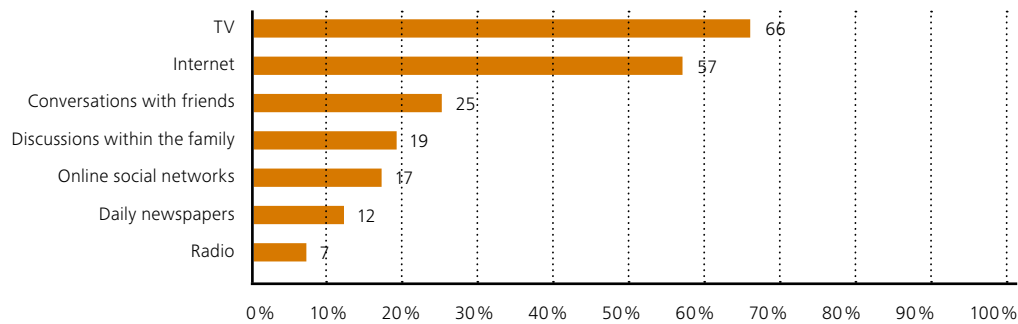
Integrally speaking, according to the research findings in studies of youth attitudes toward politics in Croatia's transition period, there has been a continuous decline in the already insufficient democratic potential exhibited by Croatian youth (Ilišin et al. 2015). Causes of this trend have been identified to a lesser extent in the democratic deficits inherited from the former totalitarian political system, and to a greater extent in the inadequate functioning of Croatian political institutions and actors as well as the country's long-term economic and social crisis. More precisely, numerous events and processes which have played out since Croatia gained its independence, accompanied by the destabilising effects of crisis have not been conducive to the democratisation of Croatian society, resulting in inadequate political socialisation of the country's youth and furthering their distance from politics.

POLITICAL INTEREST AND PARTICIPATION

In order to gain greater insight into attitudes of young people toward politics, we need to become familiar with their interest in this field of human activity. This research has shown that as many as 62 per cent of Croatian youth have little or no interest at all in general political affairs, while 12 per cent stated that they were interested or very interested. Also, 16 and 15 per cent of respondents voiced an interest in national and local politics, respectively, whereas interest in EU, USA, or Russian politics varied between 12 and eight per cent. On the other hand, the lack of interest in any of these political matrixes varied between 54 and 72 per cent. Based on these data, interest in political affairs seems to have diminished, as in 2012 Croatian politics commanded the interest of 35 per cent of respondents (as opposed to 33 per cent uninterested), and EU politics were a topic of interest for 27 per cent of Croatian youth (as opposed to 40 per cent uninterested)⁶⁴. Factor analysis allowed all the political interests surveyed to be blended into a single factor, while the analysis of variance indicated a general interest in political affairs increasing in tandem with the levels of education of respondents and their fathers: the greatest interest was observed among those with the highest levels of education, and the least among those with the lowest levels of education (F-ratio=15.05; F-ratio=15.40).

Given that the low interest of youth in political affairs is often attributed to how little attention the political arena devotes to the problems and interests of this section of the population, it is important to gain insight into the perception of how well interests of young people are represented in the political life of the country. The research showed that a mere 11 per cent of respondents thought that youth interests were very well or well represented in Croatia's political life, in contrast to 48 per cent who thought otherwise. The perceived unresponsiveness of government institutions to youth had been identified in previous research as well, correlating with opinions that politics are unfair, that young people do not have enough political knowledge and experience, and

FIGURE 8.1: Sources of information on political affairs (%)



that it is natural that only older people should engage in political affairs (Ilišin and Spajić Vrkaš 2017). The widespread, permanent impression that the needs and interests of young people are neglected, which is a homogenous perception among the population of young people, demonstrates that the government has obviously failed in formulating good youth-oriented policies.

Given the fact that Croatian youth rarely discuss politics with their families and friends, they obviously rely on other channels of finding information on politics. Figure 8.1 presents the ranking of respondents' sources of information regarding political affairs (%). As the data shows, the majority of Croatian youth obtain information on political affairs through television and the Internet, while radio was stated to be the least consulted medium. Interestingly, despite the fact that the Internet was a given when this segment of the population grew up, it was not a primary source of information on politics: as was the case in 2012, television remained the leading source of political information. Internet use did see a slight rise (by three per cent) over the last six years, as did discussions with friends (up five per cent), whereas all other sources declined, especially printed daily newspapers (down 20 per cent). No statistically relevant differences were identified between youth subgroups in terms of their use of the Internet as a source of information on political affairs, but some did emerge with regard to the use of television. Namely, statistically relevant differences in TV-use were noted in terms of respondents' age ($\chi^2=224.29$) and level of education ($\chi^2=13.97$). Television was thus the most popular source of politics-related information for the oldest and highest-educated cohorts, and least popular among the youngest and lowest-educated respondents. Especially interesting was the finding that youth with higher levels of education preferred social networks as sources of information, unlike those who had (not) completed lower-secondary education ($\chi^2=26.14$).

As was noted above, Croatian youth tend to discuss politics with their families, friends, and acquaintances rarely, and a mere fifth got their political information in family discussions. The correspondence, or lack thereof, between the political attitudes of young people and those of their parents is surely related to this finding: there seem to be more similarities than differences in this respect. Namely, 18 per cent of respondents stated that their political opinions aligned with those of their parents to a

very low degree or not at all, 29 per cent that they were somewhat aligned, while 35 per cent claimed to espouse political attitudes that were identical or very similar to those of their parents. This correspondence was greatest among highest-educated respondents ($\chi^2=29.00$) whose fathers also had higher-education degrees ($\chi^2=31.76$).

With regard to ideological self-identification, which was operationalised using a ten-point scale (1 – far-left; 10 – far-right orientation), slightly over one-quarter of respondents could not, or did not, provide an answer. At the same time, 13 per cent positioned themselves as far-left, 49 as centre-oriented, and 11 per cent identified themselves as being on the far right. A telling finding compared to 2012, the number of those unwilling or unable to position themselves ideologically has declined by almost one-half (from 52 to 27 per cent), with a simultaneous downturn (from 5.58 to 5.35 points) among those who position themselves as moderate or far right, which thus remained slightly more widespread than a left-wing orientation. Not unexpectedly, statistical analysis showed that highest-educated youth preferred left-wing options ($\chi^2=18.65$), as did the youngest (14-19) and oldest (25-29) age cohorts ($\chi^2=18.65$).

Many studies describe young people's lack of interest in institutional politics, and electoral behaviour is a relevant indicator in this respect. Data from this research shows that Croatian youth are not predominantly uninterested: thus, 41 per cent of respondents voted in the previous election, while a mere 26 per cent did not vote because they chose not to, whereas 30 per cent were too young to vote. The greatest shares among those who did vote came from the oldest age cohort ($\chi^2=35.41$) and those with the highest levels of education ($\chi^2=31.85$). At the same time, 47 per cent of youth claimed that, if national parliamentary elections were to be held, they would turn out and vote, while 36 per cent stated that they would not vote, and 17 per cent were undecided. Similarly, the oldest ($\chi^2=78.22$) and highest-educated ($\chi^2=90.25$) subgroups were most willing to participate in hypothetical elections, as were respondents with higher-education-level fathers ($\chi^2=12.14$).

Another important indicator of youth attitudes toward conventional (formal) politics is their (un)willingness to assume a political function. According to the data obtained, 49 per cent of

TABLE 8.1: Informal political participation of youth (%)

Activity	No	Not done yet, but would	Yes	Don't know	No answer
Signed a list with political requests / Supported an online petition	67	12	17	3	1
Participated in a demonstration	74	16	7	2	1
Participated in volunteer or civil society organization activities	74	22	1	2	1
Worked in a political party or political group	87	9	1	2	1
Stopped buying things for political or environmental reasons	78	10	7	4	1
Participated in political activities online/ in social networks	82	9	6	2	1

respondents were not at all willing to do so, with another 30 per cent claiming that they probably would not. On the other hand, 20 per cent would probably perform a political function, while a mere six per cent claimed that they would gladly take on such political responsibility (four per cent did not know). This lack of a sense of responsibility to assume a political function was equally prevalent among all youth subgroups included in the research, and was probably caused by thinking that they were not competent enough, doubting that changes were possible, or estimating that their potential efforts in obtaining a political function would be disproportionate to the potential gains.

Youth participation and readiness to get involved in conventional politics was more favourable than their informal political participation (Table 8.1).

As Table 8.1 shows, two-thirds to four-fifths of Croatian youth display no informal political engagement whatsoever; what was even more worrisome was their low willingness to change these percentages. The highest share of youth were willing to participate in voluntary work, but even this share was relatively low (22 per cent). The next highest share were willing to engage in protests. With regard to activities that Croatian youth have participated in, most prominent were online petitions and political demands (at a low level of 17 per cent, however), whereas complete failure was noted with regard to engagement in voluntary activities and civil society organisations (similar to their non-participation in political party engagement). In order to gain more precise insight, factor analysis extracted a single factor, with a 54.55 per cent variance explained. Analysis of variance identified age (F -ratio=17.02) and level of education (F -ratio=22.59) as characteristics affecting differences in political engagement, the result being greater informal political participation among older and better-educated cohorts.

POLITICAL VALUES AND ATTITUDES

An important dimension of political culture is political values and attitudes, which are an indicator of the democratic potential of the young population. We begin this segment of analysis with our insights into their (non-)acceptance of statements regarding the democratic system and its (lack of) functioning (Table 8.2). The majority of Croatian youth uphold democratic principles and rules, that is, they accept democracy as a good form of government, the need for opposition, and citizens' duty to participate in elections. At the same time, however, most of them also express their dissatisfaction with certain deficits in democracy. On the one hand, this dissatisfaction is generationally motivated, as young people do not think they are given enough opportunity to be heard and that politicians disregard the opinions of youth. On the other hand, they believe that Croatia needs a strong party that would advocate the interests of the common people, while simultaneously endorsing authoritarian government: every second respondent agreed that the country should have a leader who rules with a strong hand for the general good. However, the majority of youth did not agree with the questionnaire statement that under certain circumstances, dictatorship was a better form of government than democracy, nor that there were certain social conflicts which could only be resolved through violence.

At the same time, half the respondents claimed not to know enough about political affairs. Factor analysis grouped attitudes on democracy into three factors: *acceptance of democratic rules* (factor 1), *acceptance of social conflict and dictatorship* (factor 2), and *pointing out democratic deficits* (factor 3).⁶⁵ Further analysis showed the youth population to be highly homogeneous, as all subgroups were found to comprise equal shares of *acceptance of democratic rules*, which is a clear indicator of a democratic orientation and respect for institutional democratic rules, and *pointing out democratic deficits*, which, in addition to being dissatisfied with how youth are treated by politicians, incorporates an inclination toward populism and authoritarian forms of rule.

TABLE 8.2: Attitudes toward the democratic system (%)

Statements	Completely or mostly agree	Neutral	Completely or mostly disagree	Don't know
Young people should have more possibilities to speak out in politics	73	18	5	4
Democracy is a good form of government in general	64	25	7	4
I don't think politicians care about young people's opinions	63	24	8	5
A strong party representing the common folk in general is what we need in Croatia right now	62	22	7	9
Political opposition is necessary for a healthy democracy	57	26	9	8
It is the duty of every citizen in a democracy to vote	56	26	12	6
We should have a leader who rules Croatia with a strong hand for the public good	47	27	18	8
Under certain circumstances dictatorship is a better form of government than democracy	19	24	49	8
I know a lot about politics	19	27	50	4
There are conflicts in every society which can only be solved by violence	16	20	58	6

Acceptance of social conflict and dictatorship (which comprises the conviction that one knows a lot about politics), as a certain antipode to the democratic orientation, varied with regard to gender ($t=-4.55$) and fathers' level of education ($F\text{-ratio}=13.77$): it was more prevalent among male respondents, and rejected by those with fathers who had attained the highest level of education.

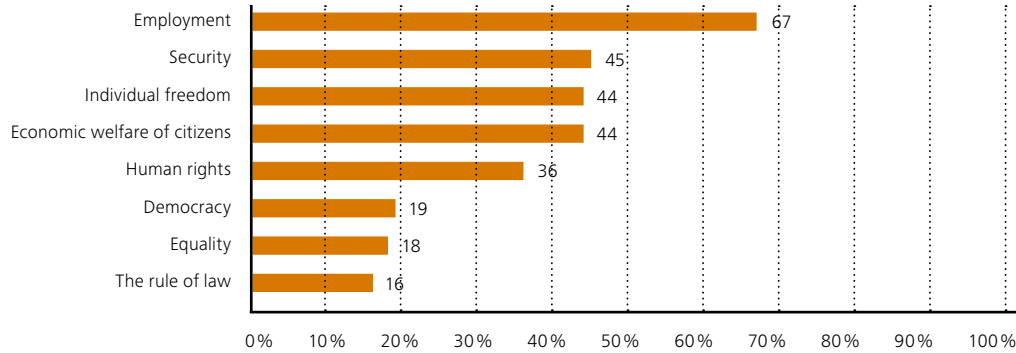
The findings of this research related to democratic attitudes have shown Croatian youth to espouse considerable democratic potential as well as non-democratic tendencies (which are surely the result of their dissatisfaction with how certain elements of the country's democratic system are functioning). It was therefore not surprising that 36 per cent of Croatian youth were equal parts satisfied and dissatisfied with the general state of Croatian democracy, followed by 29 per cent satisfied and another 29 per cent dissatisfied, whereas six per cent could not tell. This commensurately low level of satisfaction was found to decrease with the age of respondents ($\chi^2=18.23$) and their fathers' level of education ($\chi^2=23.64$), meaning that the most dissatisfied subgroup were the oldest respondents with higher-education-level fathers. How youth feel about a democratic and ordered society can be inferred from their political and social values. Figure 8.2 shows aggregated data for eight values ranked first, second, and third most important to respondents.

The one value that was chosen by the majority of youth was employment (which was also the most common first- and second-ranked value on the list). This ranking is most certainly related

to the socioeconomic situation in Croatia, characterised by a high unemployment rate in recent crisis years. Almost half the respondents chose security, individual freedom, and the economic welfare of citizens as important, and one-third chose human rights. The lowest-ranked values were democracy, equality, and rule of law, indicating that Croatian youth did not think highly of certain fundamental values of a liberal-democratic order⁶⁶.

Political values of youth can also be deduced from their opinions on how social relations ought to be ordered and organised. The majority of respondents thought that the government should take more responsibility for ensuring that everyone is provided for (77 per cent), that the income of the poor and the rich ought to be made more equal (75 per cent), and that, in the long run, hard work usually pays off in terms of a better life (67 per cent). The statement that government ownership of business and industry should be increased was supported by 44 per cent, and rejected by 20 per cent of youth. The statement that competition is harmful because it brings out the worst in people was supported by 24 per cent, and rejected by 43 per cent of respondents. Participants with lower-level-education fathers were more likely to support socially sensitive ideas on closing the gap between the income of the rich and the poor ($\chi^2=58.06$) and the government ensuring that every member of society's needs are met ($\chi^2=55.01$). Furthermore, respondents who had completed lower-secondary and vocational upper-secondary education ($\chi^2=26.74$) and those whose fathers had lower levels of education ($\chi^2=17.16$) were

FIGURE 8.2: Social and political values of youth (%)



considerably more likely to support the idea of increasing the number of government-owned businesses and industries. These findings suggest a correlation between less privileged social backgrounds and egalitarian and etatist ideas.

The above-mentioned sensitivity of youth with regard to social deprivation and inequalities is consistent with their perception of potential discrimination of particular social groups. According to the majority of respondents, there are two social groups in Croatia who do not enjoy enough rights: poor people (54 per cent) and people with disabilities (54 per cent). At the opposite pole, groups perceived as having enough rights included religious people (69 per cent), children (67 per cent), women (63 per cent), national minorities (61 per cent), youth (50 per cent), and homosexuals/LGBT people (50 per cent). Interestingly, a considerably high share of 42 per cent of respondents believe that the young population do not have enough rights, whereas the perception that a group has too many rights was most frequently held with regard to homosexuals/LGBT people (26 per cent), ethnic minorities (20 per cent), and religious people (17 per cent). Croatian youth were homogeneous in terms of their perception of how society treats people with disabilities and children. With regard to women's rights and the rights of homosexual/LGBT people, both were found to be deprived by female respondents ($\chi^2=42.56$ and $\chi^2=32.53$, respectively) and higher-education-level respondents ($\chi^2=32.25$ and $\chi^2=40.46$, respectively), as opposed to those who had completed a lower-secondary and vocational upper-secondary education. The opinion that young people did not enjoy enough rights was most prevalent among respondents with three-year vocational upper-secondary-level education ($\chi^2=19.20$) with low-educated fathers ($\chi^2=17.00$). More than any other group, female respondents perceived ethnic minorities to enjoy the least rights ($\chi^2=9.45$), and higher-education-level respondents were most likely to believe that religious people have too many rights ($\chi^2=20.07$). Participants from less privileged backgrounds or participants with lower-level education fathers were considerably more likely to consider poor people as not having enough rights ($\chi^2=20.07$)⁶⁷.

The extent to which young people in Croatia are burdened by socioeconomic issues was also corroborated by their ideas regarding which political objectives the government ought to prior-

itise. In this respect, youth perception of government political priorities should be observed in part as an indicator of political values, but also as an indicator of the problems faced by contemporary Croatian society (Figure 8.3).

The top-ranked objectives were those that addressed socioeconomic issues and phenomena that hindered economic and democratic social development of the country. What is more, the top eight objectives were deemed by the majority of respondents to be of highest priority (from 69 per cent in favour of reducing unemployment to 50 per cent in favour of saving the environment). Faced with such competition, issues relating to the development of private enterprise, national identity and security, and fighting illegal immigration were seen as slightly less relevant, as the majority of respondents described these as very important or important. Compared to 2012, the top six ranking objectives were the same in 2018, which suggests that burning social issues have also remained the same, i.e. they have not been resolved. Factor analysis grouped the political objectives examined into two latent dimensions: *ensuring economic and democratic development* (factor 1) and *fostering national security and identity* (factor 2).⁶⁸ In terms of *ensuring economic and democratic development*, opinions of young people on political priorities were differentiated with respect to their social background, or their fathers' level of education (F-ratio=12.82), being considerably more prevalent among youth with lowest and lower-secondary levels of education. Apart from this, female respondents ($t=2.79$) were more likely to endorse a need to *foster national security and identity*.

The outlook regarding a country's overall social development and the quality of its democratic system greatly depends on the modes of functioning and effectiveness of its political and social institutions, which in turn affects the level of trust assigned to these institutions by their citizens. On the whole, levels of institutional distrust among Croatian youth surpass their levels of trust (Figure 8.4). No institution featured in the questionnaire received a level of trust from the majority of young people; within this constellation, respondents were most likely to trust repressive institutions: the armed forces and the police. About one-third trusted religious institutions and volunteer movements, while one-quarter placed their trust in the European Union, media, civ-

FIGURE 8.3: Political objectives on which the government should focus (%)

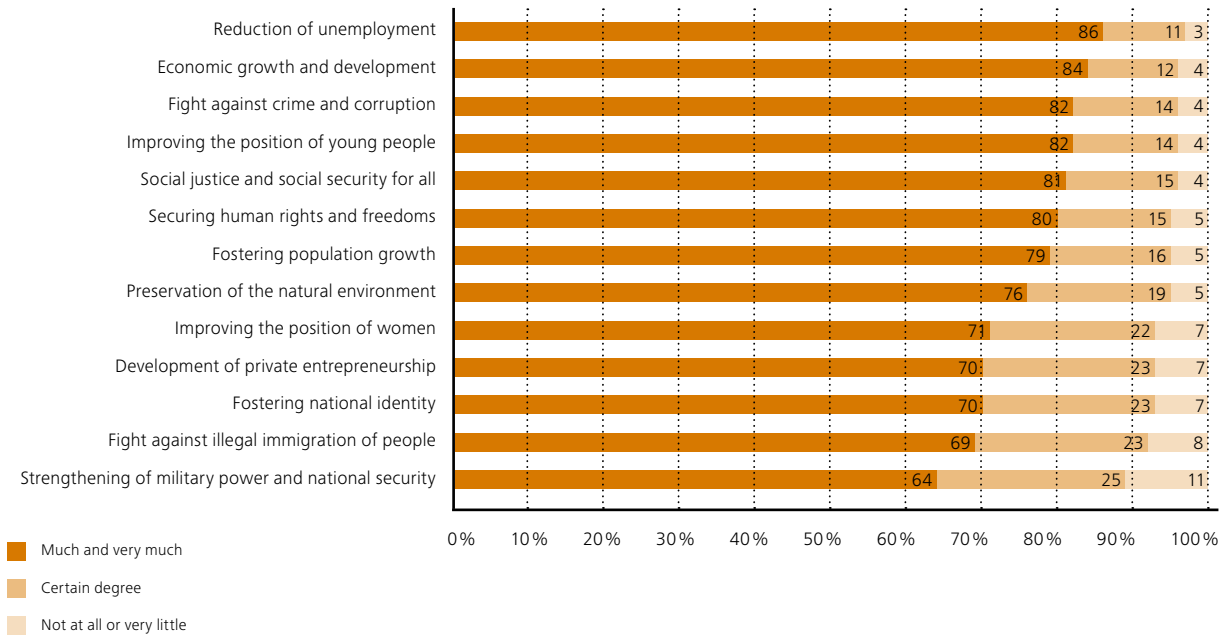
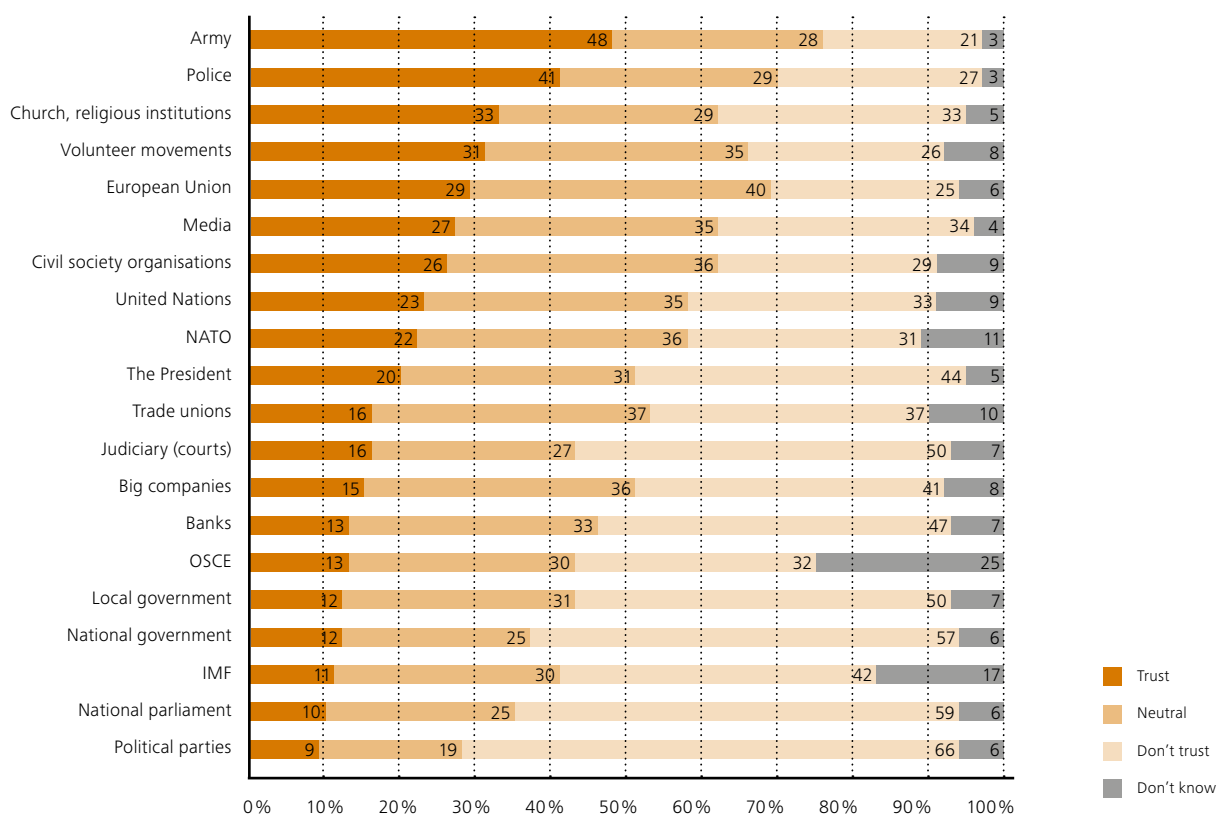


FIGURE 8.4: (Dis)trust in political and social institutions (%)



il society organisations, the United Nations, and NATO. All other institutions enjoyed the trust of between one- and two-tenths of respondents. The least amount of trust was given to political parties, the Croatian Parliament, national and local governments (with the addition of the judiciary), all of which also happened to be on the "distrust" end of the scale⁶⁹.

Factor analysis grouped institutional (dis)trust into three factors: *pillars of political and economic power* (factor 1), *civil sector and international organisations* (factor 2), and *repressive, media, and religious institutions* (factor 3).⁷⁰ Noticeable differentiation emerged among respondents with respect to trust placed in political and social institutions. Trust in *pillars of political and*

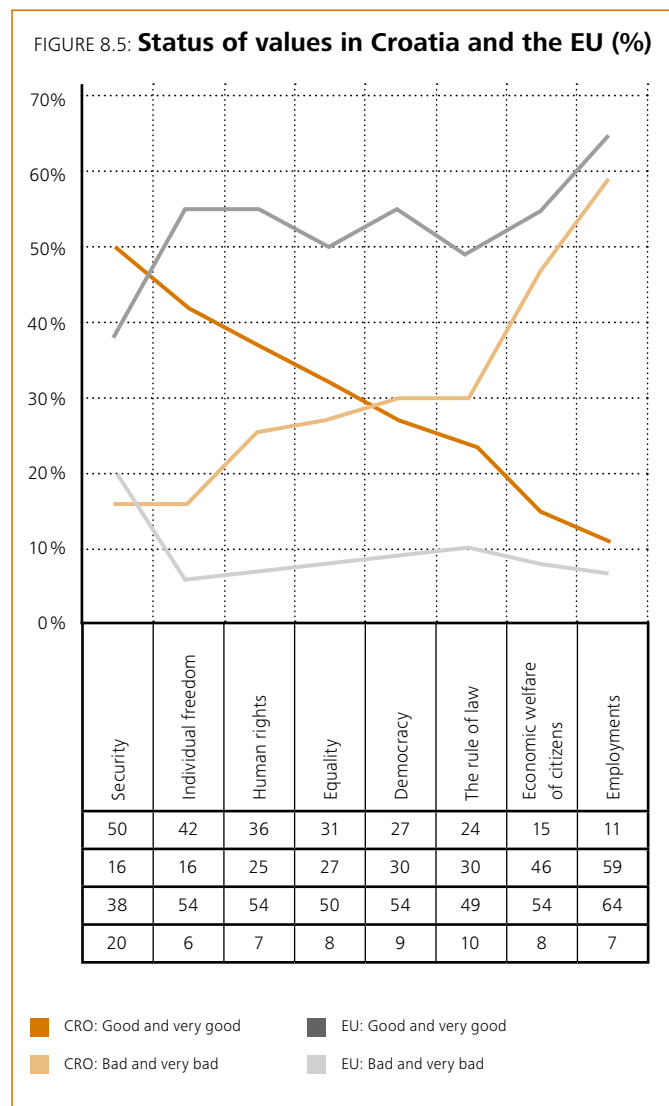
economic power, or national and local governmental entities as well as financial institutions and large corporations was most prevalent among the youngest age cohort (F-ratio=6.57), who had completed lower-level secondary education (F-ratio=9.57); it was least prevalent among the oldest respondents who had completed three-year upper-secondary-level vocational training, and very pronounced among respondents with highest-level-education fathers (F-ratio=9.60). Above-average distrust of the *civil sector and international organisations* was expressed by young people who had completed three-year upper-level secondary vocational training (F-ratio=5.54). The greatest variation was identified with regard to the *repressive, media, and religious institutions* factor, with above-average levels of trust being espoused by female respondents ($t=3.8$) and the youngest cohort (F-ratio=9.51) with lower-secondary-level education (F-ratio=9.72), and below-average levels of trust being expressed by the oldest cohort with higher-level educational degrees and same-level-education fathers (F-ratio=4.72).

CROATIA IN THE EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

The most prominent identity shared by Croatian youth is nationality/ethnicity: 85 per cent of respondents saw themselves as completely or for the most part Croatian. Following this, 80 per cent of respondents view themselves as citizens of their home towns, and 77 as citizens of their regions. Identities beyond national and local borders were slightly less pronounced, but still prominent, as 68 per cent of respondents saw themselves as Europeans, and 59 per cent as citizens of the world. The young population was relatively homogeneous in terms of their stated identities, differentiating these mainly according to the level of their fathers' education. Croatian nationality/ethnicity was thus more prevalent among respondents whose fathers had lowest and lower-secondary levels of education ($\chi^2=23.71$), while the European identity was more common among those whose fathers had completed four-year upper-secondary-level education ($\chi^2=26.26$). The sense of regional identity was far more pronounced among respondents whose fathers had completed three-year upper-secondary-level education ($\chi^2=46.02$), while respondents who achieved three-year upper-secondary-level vocational education level tended to identify themselves as citizens of the world to a slightly lesser extent than other subgroups ($\chi^2=17.07$)⁷¹.

Even with their pronounced national identity and dissatisfaction with Croatia's international position, a status comparison which comprises to what degree certain democratic values are upheld or achieved in Croatia and the EU (Figure 8.5) shows that Croatian youth are capable of critical observations with regard to their country⁷².

In Croatia's case, the values examined were grouped into two factors: *liberal-democratic values* (factor 1) and *socioeconomic values* (factor 2).⁷³ An above-average number of the youngest



respondents (F-ratio=12.51) who had completed lower-secondary and four-year upper-secondary-level education (F-ratio=7.24) felt that *liberal-democratic values* were in good standing in Croatia, as opposed to the oldest respondents who had completed three-year vocational upper-secondary-level or higher education. Similar tendencies were noted with respect to the perceived actualisation of *socioeconomic values*: this perception was highest among the youngest participants (F-ratio=10.30) who had completed lower-secondary-level education (F-ratio=130.10), and lowest among the oldest and highest-education-level respondents.

As far as the EU goes, the values examined were grouped into a single factor, which can be termed *liberal-democratic and socioeconomic values*.⁷⁴ The perception that all these values were in good standing in the EU was shared equally by all subgroups of respondents.

In the mid-2013, Croatia became the EU's 28th Member State; it is now possible to assess the effects of this integration. In the views of young people, the results of Croatia's five-year EU membership are not spectacular. In terms of economic development, 30 per cent of respondents identified positive effects, 40 per cent did not notice any changes, 13 per cent pointed out negative effects, and 17 per cent could not tell. Simultaneously, in terms

TABLE 8.3: Perceived effects of Croatia's EU integration (%)

Attitudes	Strongly and somewhat agree	Strongly and somewhat disagree	Don't know
Better possibilities for travelling and making friends	80	14	6
Better knowing of other cultures and religions	76	17	7
Better protection of human and minority rights in Croatia	63	25	12
Dependency of Croatia on more developed European countries (culturally, politically, economically, etc.)	63	24	13
Faster democratization of society	58	31	11
Better realization of Croatian interests in European politics	57	31	12
Better military protection of Croatia	57	32	11
Economic exploitation of Croatia	55	31	14
Better and higher-quality education system in Croatia	54	38	8
Quality and fast economic development of Croatia	53	38	9
Higher standard of living of people in Croatia	48	34	8
Limiting of Croatian economic development	46	41	14
Better possibilities of employment in Croatia	46	46	8
Endangerment of national identity of Croatian people	41	47	12
Violation of Croatian sovereignty	38	50	12

of political development, 24 per cent noted positive effects, 39 per cent stated they did not perceive any changes at all, 16 per cent felt there had been a negative effect, and 21 per cent could not tell. Although the assessment of economic effects was slightly more favourable than that of political effects, the most important finding is that in both cases two-fifths of respondents did not think that EU integration resulted in any noticeable changes.

These assessments take on a different look when the questionnaire examined concrete effects of integration, spanning various areas of life. In this case, respondents emphasised more, and more frequently, the positive effects of Croatia's integration in the EU (Table 8.3). This perception clashes somewhat with the above-mentioned finding, as well as with the fact that Croatia ranks at the bottom of EU Member States' development in terms of the majority of relevant factors, particularly economic development. The discordance is probably the result of the optimism that EU membership would guarantee change for the better, at least in the future, as well as the need to acknowledge that expectations regarding the EU, which had been a prominent aspect of the country's accession process, were at least partially realised when Croatia finally joined the Union.

In a nutshell, the majority of respondents felt that there had been positive effects in the sociocultural and political spheres, whereas socioeconomic changes were perceived to a considerably lesser degree. In concrete terms, Croatian youth identified better opportunities for travel and getting to know other peoples' cul-

tures, better-quality education, a swifter pace of democratisation of society and better protection of human and minority rights as well as better achievement of Croatian interests in the EU, greater military security, and accelerated economic development. Despite this last factor, however, the majority of respondents felt that there had been an increase in Croatia's dependence on developed European countries as well as its economic exploitation. With respect to employment in Croatia, a division emerged between respondents who thought that the situation had improved and those who disagreed. Participants expressed the least level of agreement with the statements that European integration endangered Croatia's national identity and sovereignty: in fact, these were the only questionnaire items on which the majority of respondents disagreed. These assessments are consistent with previous research findings on the expected effects of Croatia joining the EU: there has been a decrease in the perception that both positive and particularly negative changes have occurred⁷⁵. Factor analysis extracted three factors: *positive socioeconomic and political effects of integration* (factor 1); *negative political and socioeconomic effects of integration* (factor 2); and *positive sociocultural effects of integration* (factor 3).⁷⁶ The socioeconomic and political benefits of Croatia's European integration were most often noted by respondents with lower-secondary-level education (F-ratio=4.46) and least prevalent among those with three-year upper-secondary-level vocational training; the perception of positive benefits diminishes with age (F-ratio=5.26).

9

MOBILITY

KEY FINDINGS

- One-thirds of Croatian youth expressed a desire to emigrate, whereas two-thirds were not at all interested in moving abroad. The majority of respondents expressed a moderate desire to move to another country, while one-tenth stated that this desire was strong or very strong.
- The profile of potential migrants was as follows: a desire to move abroad was mostly expressed by male respondents; a moderate desire to emigrate was more prevalent among respondents with higher-education-level fathers; the strongest desire to emigrate was predominant among respondents from lower-strata social backgrounds and those whose fathers had (not) completed lower-secondary and three-year upper-secondary-level education. Potential migrants expressing a moderate, strong, and very strong desire to move tended to come from three regions: Lika, Kordun, and Banija; Gorski Kotar and Hrvatsko Primorje; and the Zagreb region. Respondents who have taken concrete steps toward moving abroad tended to be from the older age cohort, most often with four-year upper-secondary-level education, and a very low amount of cultural capital. Those who were interested in leaving soon (within six months or two years) mostly came from the ranks of three-year upper-secondary-level education, whereas those who had completed four-year upper-secondary or higher-education level preferred to move within the following five years.
- Reasons for moving to another country were mostly economic (a higher standard of living, higher income, and better employment opportunities), while slightly more than one-tenth of young people wanted to continue their education abroad.
- Germany was the top country of choice for potential Croatian youth emigrants: if they were to leave Croatia, close to one-third of respondents would pick this country of destination that is so historically popular among Croatians.

- Slightly less than one-half of Croatian youth have a built-in support system in their potential country of immigration, which is an indicator of connections with emigrants that could be of help if they move abroad.

INTRODUCTION

Given the complexity of migration as a phenomenon, it deserves to be studied as a multicomplex sociocultural systems (Richmond 1978), especially in light of the fact that rapid social shifts (war, poverty, insecurity, non-democratic systems, etc.) are invariably linked to a surge in migration flows. The traditional theory of push and pull factors (Lee 1966) and social network theory (Massey et al. 1994) take an individualist approach to migration processes, that is, they are based on a distinction between push and pull factors often used in migration analyses. As such, these theories are particularly useful in interpreting migrations where individuals try to maximise their personal interests. More complex theoretical approaches, in addition to their interest in explaining migration flows through individual motivation, integrate contextual factors into their analyses as well as interrelationship between countries at the centre and those in the periphery (Castles and Miller 1993).

Typical of post-modern societies, hypermobility manifests itself within the European Union, among other ways, in the form of migration of its citizens, rendering national borders more and more permeable (Doherty et al. 2010). Economic prosperity and political stability represent pull factors for immigration from less prosperous EU countries over the long term, and labour markets are liberalised and globalised. At the same time, however, immigrant employment policies are selective and directed at mitigating certain deficits (Eurostat 2017), while work restrictions for Croatian citizens in the European Economic Area (EEA) will remain in place until 1 July 2020 at the latest (Župarić-Iljić 2016).

While discussions in the previous decade mostly addressed Croatia's brain drain, even to the point of describing it as an academic exodus (Golub 2000, 2003; Adamović and Mežnarić 2003) exceeding "normal" semi-professional mobility, current emigration has intensified further, especially since Croatia joined the EU in 2013. Although Croatia has been depleted of a precious resource for a number of years, losing its highest-educated people to emigration, the fact that wider segments of the population are more interested in emigrating has revitalised issues of demographic loss (Akrap and Čipin 2011) as well as depopulation of certain Croatian regions.

In terms of youth population drain, certain structural factors emerge as prominent: high youth unemployment rates (ranking among the highest in the EU), lack of educational reform, and structural inadequacy of the labour force (Dragun and Relja 2006). These are the three main push factors underlying emigration. In addition, there are a number of general push factors such as adverse economic conditions, decline in living standard, lack of job opportunities within one's field of education and training, long job searches, and pay below what one could expect on the basis of one's qualifications. The pull factors of being able to choose one's position, greater earnings and more favourable entrepreneurial conditions represent stable factors of attraction exerted by many European countries with potential candidates for emigration (Župarić-Ilić 2016: 3).

According to an FES study carried out in countries in eastern Europe and the western Balkans between 2011 and 2015,⁷⁷ Croatian youth appear to be less inclined towards geographical mobility than their peers in other countries⁷⁸.

Despite these findings, the number of young people considering emigration with no appealing alternative in Croatia proper is a reason for concern. In this respect, unrelenting youth unemployment, coupled with political instability and growing disenchantment among citizens with the current social, political and economic situation might overcome the fear of the unknown associated with living abroad, potentially fuelling emigration from Croatia even further.

EMIGRATION EXPERIENCES

The emigration experience of studying abroad is a good way for youth to broaden their work and life experience and establish friendships and acquaintances, but it can also be an incentive for emigration (although study-abroad participants, especially scholarship recipients, are more often described as circular migrants) (Adamović and Mežnarić 2003). On the other hand, experience with international education is an indicator of the broader processes of integrating youth in (global European) flows through academic mobility programmes, language courses, internships, and the like. Earlier emigration experience for the purposes of education/training was determined to be the case among five per cent of our research participants. Thus, two per cent of

upper-secondary-level school pupils and students of higher education, respectively, had studied abroad, whereas one per cent of youth had studied abroad for the purposes of vocational education or training. Experience of studying abroad was found mostly among respondents 20 years of age and older ($\chi^2=24.58$) and those who were enrolled in or had completed higher education ($\chi^2=31.77$). They tend to come from families with higher-education-level fathers ($\chi^2=55.90$) and households with over 100 books ($\chi^2=31.82$).⁷⁹ An overwhelming majority of respondents (80 per cent) had no experience of education or training abroad and expressed no intention of doing anything about such in the future. A segment of youth was identified (16 per cent), however, who were interested in gaining study-abroad experience in the future despite not having had any at the time of the survey. Respondents who planned to study abroad mostly came from the youngest cohort (19 and younger) and had lower-secondary-level education ($\chi^2=31.77$), higher-education-level fathers ($\chi^2=55.90$), and families with a great amount of cultural capital ($\chi^2=31.82$).

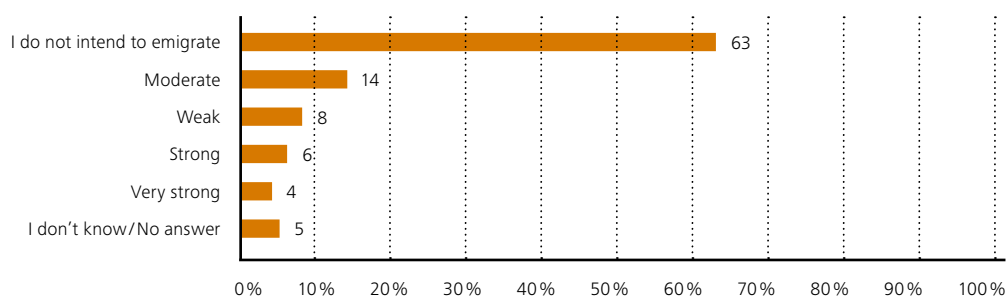
In terms of earlier emigration experience, it should be said that a large majority of Croatian youth had no experience of living outside the country longer than six months (95 per cent). Longer stays abroad were mostly noted among respondents 25 years of age or older ($\chi^2=28.97$), those with the highest levels of education or three-year upper-secondary-level education ($\chi^2=13.16$), and those from families with the greatest amounts of cultural capital ($\chi^2=14.43$).

EMIGRATION ASPIRATIONS

Compared to the 2012 round of FES youth research in Croatia, youth aspirations to move to other countries dropped by 24 per cent in 2018.⁸⁰ Thus, 63 per cent of youth expressed no desire to move in 2018 (Figure 9.1), compared to 39 per cent in 2012. Given that both the 2018 and the 2012 rounds of research solely examined the potential for emigration, we can only speculate and say that respondents who had expressed a strong desire to move abroad in 2012 had done so by 2018, but also that social circumstances have changed, contributing to the concept of moving abroad seeming less attractive.

Figure 9.1 shows the distribution of intensity of the desire or intention of young people to leave the country for a longer period of time. As was noted above, the predominant segment comprises youth who have no intention of emigrating, followed by those expressing a moderate desire to leave (14 per cent). A strong or very strong desire to move abroad was noted by ten per cent of respondents, making them a potentially more solid basis for making the move. It should also be noted that the percentage of those respondents expressing a great interest in moving abroad dropped to 17 per cent, compared to 27 per cent in 2012. A mild interest in moving abroad was voiced by only eight per cent of respondents in 2018. In terms of an expressed intention to leave in the questionnaire, a total of one-third of young people could be said to espouse some

FIGURE 9.1: Youth aspirations to move abroad for a period longer than six months (%)

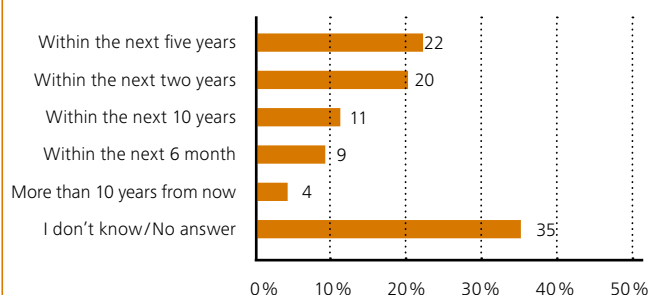


degree of emigration aspiration: this is a high percentage, with a potentially significant socioeconomic impact on society⁸¹.

The desire to move abroad was expressed mostly by male respondents ($\chi^2=19.25$), who were particularly well-represented among respondents with a strong or very strong desire to leave, whereas female respondents were more prevalent among those who did not intend to emigrate. Fathers' levels of education also proved to be statistically significant in this respect: respondents with a moderate desire to move were significantly more likely to have higher-education-level fathers or fathers who had completed three-year upper-secondary-level vocational training. On the other hand, no particular differentiation according to fathers' levels of education was found among those with a strong or very strong desire to move, besides being slightly more prevalent among those who had (not) completed a lower-secondary and three-year upper-secondary-level education ($\chi^2=31.05$). A moderate desire to move abroad was registered among respondents with the greatest amounts of cultural capital, followed by those with low levels ($\chi^2=40.16$). In terms of geographical regions, a moderate desire to move was most common among respondents from the two regions of Lika, Kordun and Banija, and Istria, Gorski Kotar and Hrvatsko Primorje, whereas respondents from Istria and the Zagreb region expressed a strong desire to move abroad ($\chi^2=65.79$).

A considerable portion of participants who expressed some degree of desire to emigrate were not able to provide an estimated timeline for their potential move, or they did not know when they would make it happen (Figure 9.2).

FIGURE 9.2: Time period for aspired emigration of young people from Croatia (%)



The most interesting category of respondents was those planning to leave the country in the upcoming six months (nine per cent) because, unlike other participants in the study, they presumably already had concrete plans in place. Among those wanting to leave the country, the highest number were planning to leave within the next five and following two years (a total of 41 per cent)⁸².

The largest percentage of potential emigrants were uncertain as to how long their stay abroad might be (40 per cent). Next in terms of prevalence were short-term plans, "from one to five years" (14 per cent), and "five to ten years" (11 per cent). The long-term-stay category was chosen by 17 per cent of respondents, with six per cent wanting to live abroad for more than 20 years, and 11 per cent expressing a desire to stay for good. Certainly, the potential drain of youth including those staying abroad for a long period of time can comprise various predictors of this type of move, and the data available in this research is insufficient to explain it. One interesting finding was that five per cent of respondents planned to leave the country for "less than a year," which might include seasonal or temporary employment in neighbouring countries. The short-term option for staying abroad in the questionnaire was predominantly chosen by female respondents (up to a year, and between one and five years' stay), whereas long-term plans (five to ten years, more than ten years and for good) were a more prevalent option among male respondents ($\chi^2=19.09$), which might be an indicator of seasonal work by women in what are traditionally female-dominated occupations (caretakers, maids, nurses, etc.) in neighbouring countries. The regions of respondents' origin correlated significantly with the aspired length of stay abroad: "less than a year" was most commonly preferred by respondents from Istria, Gorski Kotar and Hrvatsko Primorje, and Dalmatia, whereas Slavonia and Northern Croatia were prevalent in the "one-to-five-years" category. The option to live abroad for more than ten years was the preferred option of Dalmatian respondents, while "for good" was chosen by most respondents from the least developed region of Lika, Kordun and Banija ($\chi^2=56.75$).

With respect to taking concrete steps toward moving abroad, the majority of potential emigrants had not been active (62 per cent), which was to be expected since they were potential emigrants. Nevertheless, actions taken by respondents toward this

goal predominantly included contact with friends and relatives (27 per cent), which suggests connections and networking with emigrants; next was contact with employers (six per cent), and contact with potential universities and schools (five per cent). Two per cent of respondents had contacted embassies, and as many had secured scholarships, which is an indicator of probable academic mobility. This group primarily comprised undergraduate students or higher-education-level respondents ($\chi^2=12.60$).

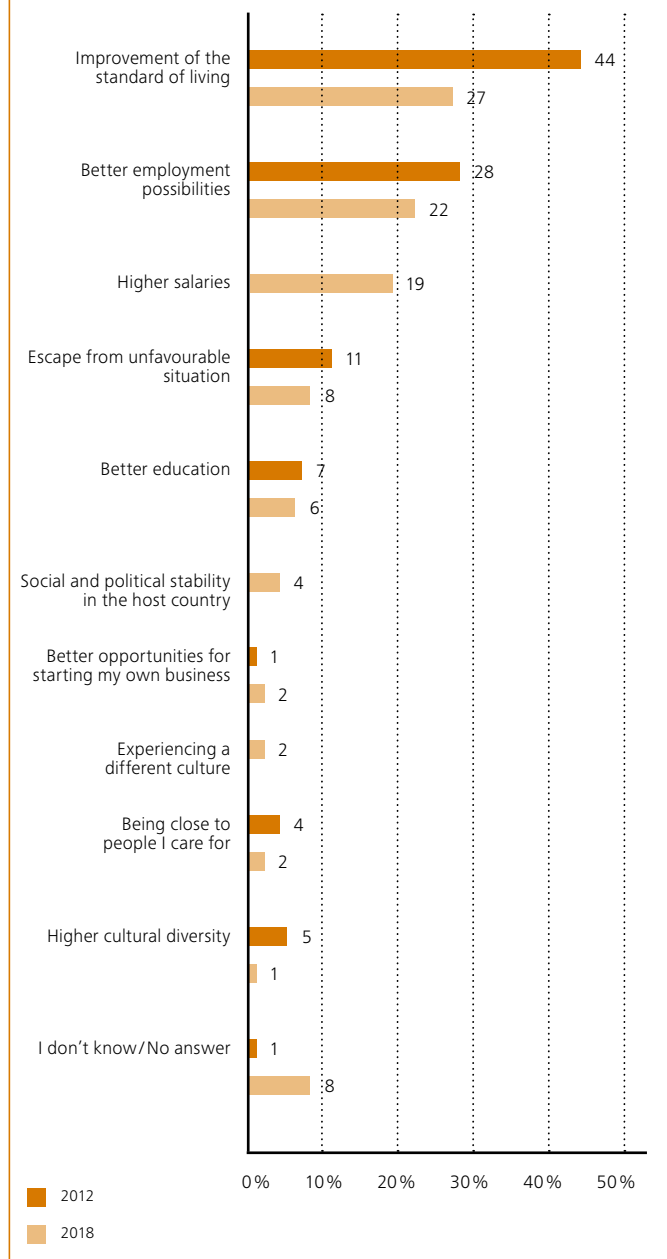
Respondents who had taken concrete steps toward moving abroad mostly came from the oldest age cohort (25 and older) ($\chi^2=16.28$), most often had a four-year upper-secondary-level education ($\chi^2=29.96$), and had extremely limited amounts of cultural capital ($\chi^2=15.94$). In terms of geographical region, respondents from Dalmatia were the most active in this respect ($\chi^2=31.16$). Similar statistical significances were noted with respect to socio-demographic characteristics of respondents who had contacted family and friends about moving abroad: they also belonged to the oldest age cohort ($\chi^2=18.77$), most often had a four-year upper-secondary-level education ($\chi^2=20.43$), and came from the regions of Dalmatia and Slavonia ($\chi^2=20.43$).

MAIN REASONS TO MOVE ABROAD

Among all the reasons to move abroad, economic factors were clearly predominant: an improved standard of living, better employment opportunities, and higher income thus constituted the most important economic pull factors toward other countries (a total of 68 per cent). In comparison with the 73 per cent response rate citing economic pull factors in the 2012 round of research⁸³ (improved standard of living and easier employment), the prevalence of economic factors is still highly present in 2018 (Figure 9.3).

The next most popular pull factor in 2018 was better education opportunities: this is a thematically separate pull factor, which has slightly diminished compared to 2012, corroborating the continuity of interest in education abroad by a segment of youth. Cultural diversity and experiencing a different culture did not register as particularly appealing to Croatian youth, and neither did the social and political stability of a potential host country, since these were probably presumed to already exist in the most attractive destinations for emigration. Evidently, few respondents had entrepreneurial interests and would rely on starting their own businesses abroad, or would move to be close to people they cared for. The only push factor among the potential answers featured in the questionnaire, "to escape from an unfavourable situation," was chosen by eight per cent of respondents, only slightly higher than the 11 per cent registered in 2012 (formulated as "to escape the unfavourable situation in Croatia"). In order to further clarify the relevance of push factors presumed to affect emigration potential and to provide a satisfactory explanation regarding the social-political context of moving abroad,

FIGURE 9.3: Main reasons to move abroad in 2012 and 2018 (%)



correlations were examined with chosen variables. Respondents whose general outlook for Croatia was bleak were also more inclined to move abroad ($r=-.142$), as were those who were pessimistic about Croatia's economy in the next ten years ($r=-.167$). Respondents who were optimistic about their own personal future in the ensuing ten years were also more inclined to emigrate ($r=.154$). As far as political factors go, respondents who expressed general dissatisfaction with the state of democracy in Croatia ($r=-.219$), and those identifying themselves as on the left wing of the political spectrum ($r=-.100$) were also more likely to be interested in emigrating.

Of all sociodemographic variables, only age proved to be statistically significant: the oldest respondents (25 years of age and older) were more likely to leave to improve their standard

of living, while the youngest (19 and younger) were more likely to move for better education and career opportunities ($\chi^2=22.16$), which is consistent with the findings presented above.

HOST COUNTRIES

To date, studies of the emigration potential of Croatian youth (Ilišin et al. 2013; Potočnik and Adamović 2018) have established that young people are likely to consider historically popular countries of destination for Croatian citizens as potential destinations for their own emigration. This primarily means Germany and Austria, but as of late, new channels of emigration to the United Kingdom and Scandinavian countries have also opened up. The top-ranking potential host countries for Croatian youth were Germany (33 per cent), Austria (nine per cent), United Kingdom (eight per cent), Sweden and Switzerland (six per cent each), and the USA (five per cent); other countries were chosen by less than five per cent of respondents each, while 11 per cent of respondents were undecided.⁸⁴ This variable is not entirely comparable to the findings produced by the 2012 round of youth research, although Germany ranked at the top even back then (with 20 per cent of respondents), followed by “other EU countries” with 21 per cent, the USA (18 per cent), Australia (ten per cent), and other countries or groups of countries.

The former round of FES youth research (Potočnik and Adamović, 2018) found that Croatian youth had to a certain extent already established support networks in their potential host countries of immigration, and that they also had basic information to find their bearings in new circumstances.

The latest data shows that 44 per cent of Croatian youth have support networks in their potential host countries for emigration, but only a smaller share had enough information to successfully find their way in a new country. Respondents were relatively undifferentiated with respect to their existing support networks in potential host countries: statistically significant correlations were only found with regard to the level of education ($\chi^2=35.35$), namely in the sense that youth with three-year upper-secondary-level education could expect to rely on such networks to the

greatest extent (62 per cent), and those with lower levels of education to the least extent. This finding was to be expected, given the fact that youth with lower levels of education, that is, youth from the youngest age cohort, were not yet able to build support networks abroad.

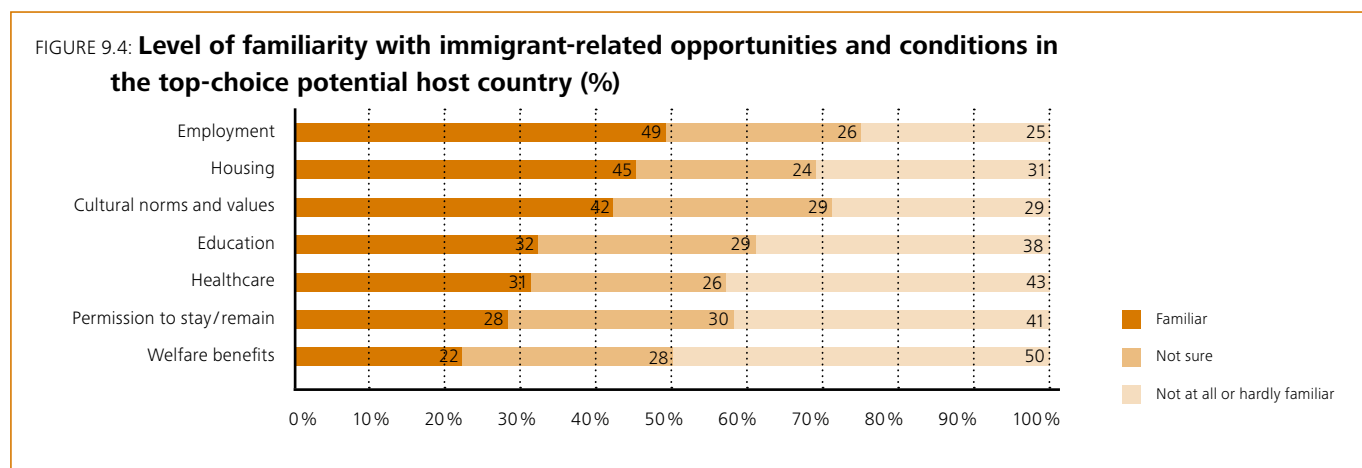
As Figure 9.4 shows, slightly less than half the respondents were familiar with conditions in the labour markets of their potential host countries, 45 per cent claimed to be familiar with housing options, while as little as 28 per cent were acquainted with legal requirements governing entry and stay in the country, and as few as 22 per cent were knowledgeable about welfare benefits.

Croatian youth seem to be relatively homogenous in terms of how familiar they are with opportunities and conditions facing immigrants in their potential host countries: differences were noted at the regional level, and only with respect to familiarity with employment opportunities ($\chi^2=28.66$) and cultural norms and values ($\chi^2=30.68$). Youth from Slavonia felt most prepared to face the labour market in their host countries, while those who felt least prepared came from Lika, Kordun and Banija. Youth from the Zagreb region considered themselves most acquainted with the cultural norms and values of their potential destination countries, while their peers from Slavonia, and Lika, Kordun and Banija ranked lowest in this respect.

Successful acclimatisation in a host country greatly depends on one’s knowledge of the local language: our research findings suggest that most Croatian youth could successfully find their way using their language skills. 12 per cent of respondents claimed to be highly proficient in the official language of their top-choice potential host country, 39 per cent claimed to have a good (working) knowledge of the local language, 32 assessed their own communication skills as basic, while 17 per cent stated that they had no knowledge of the host-country language whatsoever.

If their command of the local language of the host country was insufficient, the majority of youth were willing to learn it (80 per cent), 17 per cent were not certain, whereas three per cent were resolutely unwilling to do so.

In the context of the Croatian youth drain to other countries, public discussions (for the most part carried out via Internet



portals and print media) often address collateral losses suffered by the country, as well as opportunities and downsides of emigration faced by youth in their countries of destination. Rarely addressed, though, are the ways in which immigrating youth can contribute to the development and prosperity of their host countries: in this respect, it might be useful to provide insight into this aspect of potential emigration. The majority of Croatian youth believed that they could contribute to their potential host countries, namely in the following ways: by demonstrating high job performance (94 per cent), by being loyal citizens (93 per cent), and by transferring and sharing specific knowledge and skills with others (94 per cent). Also, 82 per cent of respondents thought they could contribute to their host countries' scientific or cultural development, while the least share (which was nevertheless a majority) of 68 per cent saw their potential contribution in terms of accept-

ing a job that was less desired by the local population. Respondents' statements on potential contributions to their host countries were fairly homogeneous: the only differentiation noted was the correlation between accepting a job less desired by the local population and their regional background ($\chi^2=23.70$): this potential contribution was selected by the largest share of youth from Lika, Kordun and Banija (87 per cent), and the least share by youth from Northern Croatia (53 per cent). The regional distribution of youth who selected this option suggests that a willingness to accept jobs unattractive to the local population was more likely among youth coming from regional backgrounds characterised by poor employment options, as opposed to youth from more developed regions with better job options, who were less willing to accept jobs not preferred by their peers in their potential host countries.

10

LEISURE AND LIFESTYLE

KEY FINDINGS

- The leisure time of Croatian youth is predominantly devoted to entertainment and relaxation activities, with considerably less participation in activities contributing to personal growth and development. Especially intriguing in this respect was the finding that almost one-quarter of Croatian youth never engage in sports, suggesting an underdeveloped awareness of the importance of physical activity in health maintenance and life-quality improvement.
- Almost all Croatian youth have everyday access to the Internet, which they mostly use for social networking and to share various content. An indicative finding in this respect was the fact that the majority of youth did not possess enough awareness of potential abuse of personal data, nor had they developed adequate strategies for building their network of virtual friends or turning them into close, real-life friends.

INTRODUCTION

Leisure time is an area of everyday life that is of particular importance to young people due to its socialisation potential. In this respect, what youth and leisure have in common is a pronounced dynamic and openness to new trends. Leisure time is also a very important segment of lifestyle, understood as “the means of satisfying an individual’s personal needs in certain group circumstances in social life” and identified in the spheres of consumption, free time, and communication (Pešić 1977: 126).

The dominant theoretical approach in the sociology of leisure understands leisure time as a residual category, that is, as an individual’s spare time after performing their socially compulsory

activities (which include formal education and learning). In this respect, true leisure time is characterised by indulging in activities involving one’s own free will, apart from the so-called semi-free obligations of society and family (Dumazedier 1967), that is, time primarily characterised by “freedom, choice, and self-determination” (Rojek 2010: 4).

This outline of the relationship between work and leisure reflects scientific studies on leisure that found their starting point over half a century ago: during the rise of the so-called welfare state, material standard and consumption increased considerably, and leisure time gained increasing importance when it came to improving the quality of contemporary life. However, the phenomenon of leisure came to be reconsidered with the neoliberal era that began in the 1980s and the changes brought about by post-industrial society and their intensification due to economic crises. On the one hand, job insecurity, the demands of career-building, and the steady rise of consumerism have contributed to an expansion of working time at the expense of non-working time. On the other hand, the emergence of information technology ushered in “telecommuting” and work being performed outside of established work spaces, blurring the distinction between working and non-working time and requiring a reorganisation of everyday life (Rojek 2010).

In tandem with the changes occurring in the sphere of leisure, the general increase in levels of education and the variety of available leisure venues and content (created by the welfare society itself), particularly mediated by mass media and new technologies, are expected to contribute to even more versatile ways of spending leisure time (Harris 2005). This involves the quality of leisure, which is linked to its functions. These functions have been summarised by J. Dumazedier (1974) into three basic groups: rest and recuperation, entertainment and pastime, and personality

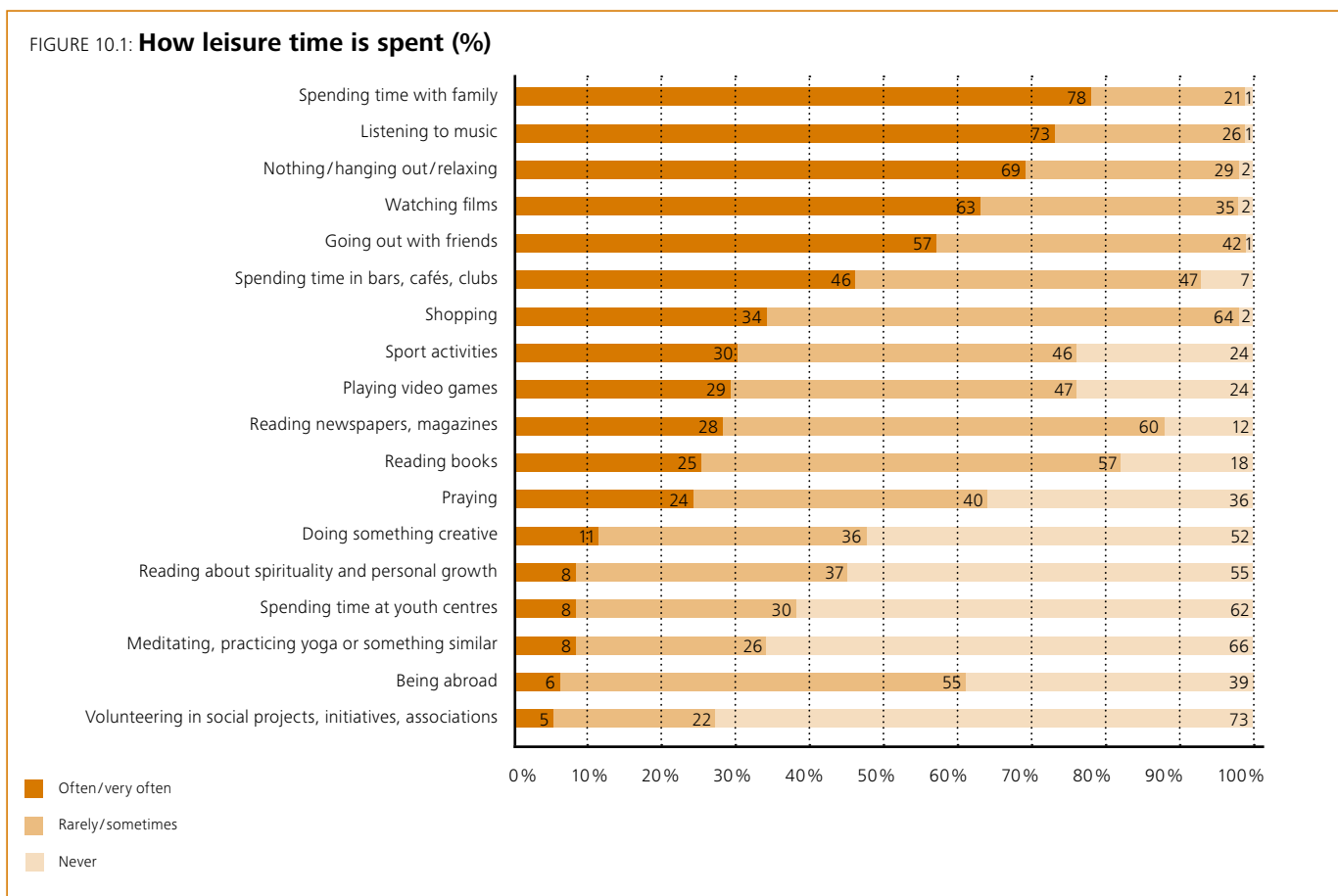
cultivation and development. Ways of spending one's leisure time, although primarily observed in relation to socially compulsory work, correlate with a number of other factors. This view is shared by the pluralist approach to leisure (Harris 2005; Rojek 2005; Roberts 2006; Rojek et al. 2006; Shildrick and MacDonald 2006), which holds that the free choice of leisure activities is conditioned by previous socialisation influences as well as existing situational circumstances, i.e., it results from the interaction between subjective and objective factors.

As these theoretical perspectives show, leisure is subjected to a wide variety of requirements, which tend to be even more salient with regard to young people. In this regard, leisure time is understood as a suitable playing field for desirable and long-term socialisation effects because it involves informal (spontaneous) learning in adequate spaces which conform with youth interests (Lefebvre 1991; Zeijl et al. 2002; Wilson et al. 2010; Gammon and Elkington 2015). The fact that the requirements of a cultivating, enriching leisure are difficult to achieve is corroborated by research results, which repeatedly point out that the free time of young people – as well as other population groups – in all contemporary societies is mostly consumed by activities the primary function of which is entertainment and pastimes, which are in turn strongly affected by consumerism⁸⁵ (Miles 1998, 2000; Roberts and Fagan 1999; Zeijl et al. 2002; Roberts et al. 2005).

HOW LEISURE TIME IS SPENT

Tendencies regarding leisure time of young people identified in 2018 (Figure 10.1) and the hierarchy of activities examined were consistent with youth affinities established in previous studies. However, a comparison of findings regarding frequent participation in particular activities with results from 2012 (Ilišin et al. 2013: 70) showed a decrease in the frequency of listening to music (from 80 to 73 per cent) and going out with one's friends (from 67 to 57 per cent), an increase in watching films (from 52 to 63 per cent), with the frequency of engaging in sports and reading books and/or newspapers remaining the same.

With respect to the frequency of participation, three groups of youth leisure activities have emerged in 2018. The first group comprises activities in which the majority of young people engage frequently, one-fifth to one-third occasionally, and one to two percent never. In other words, the everyday lives of a majority of Croatian youth are to a large extent preoccupied with family,⁸⁶ listening to music, socialising, and relaxing with no other activities,⁸⁷ watching films and going out with friends, mostly to cafés/bars or clubs (which is a frequent activity for 46 per cent, and an occasional one for 47 per cent of youth). These are therefore activities related to entertainment, pastimes, and relaxation. The second group comprises activities in which the majority or the greatest number of youth participate occasionally, one-quarter to one-third frequently, and 12 to 39 per cent never. This includes leisure time spent shopping, engaging in sports, playing video



games, reading newspapers and books, prayer, and travelling abroad (which was a frequent activity for six per cent of respondents). In this context, it should be noted that as many as 24 per cent of Croatian youth never engage in sports activities and 18 per cent never read books, which is consistent with findings from earlier studies. Evidently, there is a need to stimulate the development of reading habits among young people, as well as a healthy lifestyle based on regular physical activity. The third group of activities are those in which the majority of young people never participate, one-fifth to one-third participate occasionally, and five to eight per cent participate frequently. These are creative activities, reading literature on personal development and spirituality, spending time at youth centres (which are scarce in Croatia to begin with), meditating and practising yoga, and volunteering⁸⁸.

The fairly numerous activities were grouped into five factors through factor analysis: *orientation toward spirituality and social engagement* (factor 1); *entertainment and relaxation* (factor 2); *preoccupation with going out* (factor 3); *orientation toward personal development* (factor 4); and *preoccupation with video games and sports* (factor 5).⁸⁹ *Orientation toward spirituality and social engagement* is a free-time pattern characterised by activities and content that contribute to an individual's personal spiritual growth and getting involved with their community. This pattern was present at above-average levels among female respondents ($t=4.03$) and higher-education-level respondents (F-ratio=6.84), as well as those with higher-education-level fathers (F-omjer=21.97); it was below average among male participants who had completed three-year vocational upper-secondary-level schools whose fathers had the same level of education. *Entertainment and relaxation* is a field filled with activities and content which have now been "typical" of contemporary youth leisure time for decades. As widespread as these activities were, Croatian youth still differed in terms of age (F-ratio=12.75), level of education (F-ratio=6.42), and fathers' level of education (F-ratio=17.53): an above-average inclination to engage in such activities was noted among the youngest survey participants who had completed lower-secondary or three-year vocational upper-secondary-level schools whose fathers had achieved a three-year upper-secondary-level education. Although *preoccupation with going out* was also highly prevalent among Croatian youth, considerable differences were to be found regarding which activities were preferred. Namely, going to cafés with friends was most popular among male respondents ($t=-5.02$) and those aged 20–24 (F-ratio=23.15), who had completed a four-year upper-secondary-level education (F-ratio=36.63), and least popular among the youngest participants who had completed their lower-secondary-level education. *Orientation toward personal development*, evidenced by dedication to reading and creative activities, was present on an above-average level among female respondents ($t=6.13$) and higher-education-level respondents (F-ratio=34.30), with higher-education-level fathers (F-ratio=25.29), and below average among participants who had completed a three-year vocational upper-secondary-level education and those whose fathers had

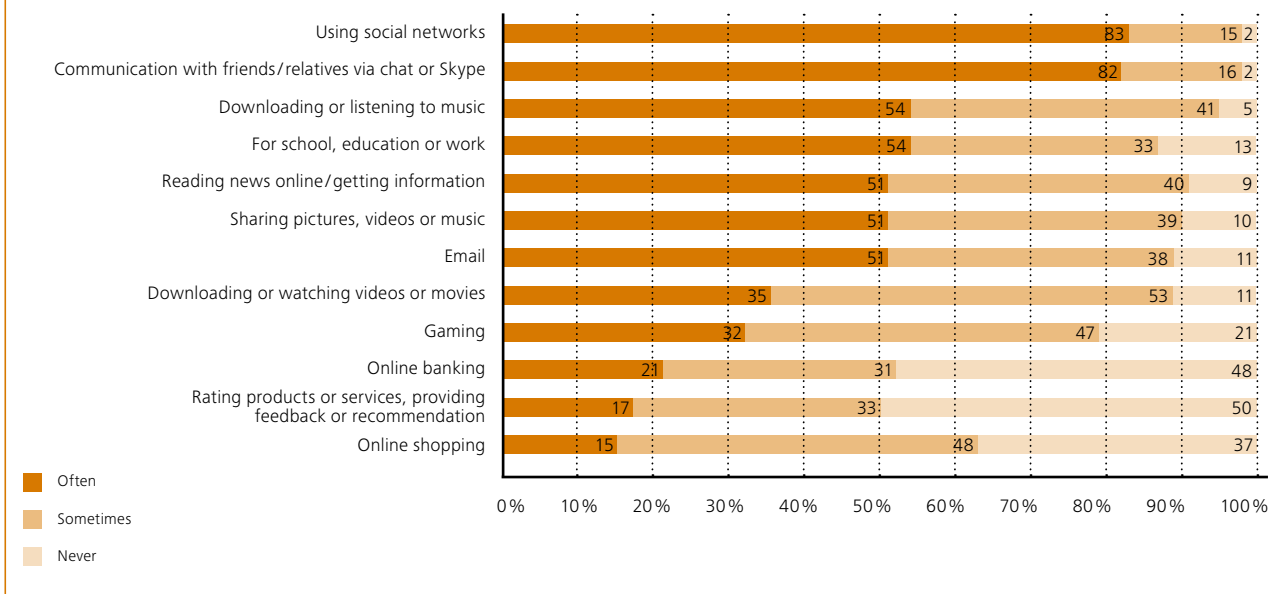
lower levels of education. *Preoccupation with video games and sports* was, expectedly, particularly widespread among the youngest cohort (F-ratio=68.07) and male respondents ($t=-14.43$), those with a lower-secondary-level education (F-ratio=30.91), but also among respondents with higher-education-level fathers (F-ratio=8.46). At the same time, these activities were least popular among respondents with three-year vocational upper-secondary-level education whose fathers had the same, or lower, level of education. In short, there are striking differences in leisure preferences among Croatian youth, who are in turn influenced by the type and conditions of their socialisation⁹⁰.

INTERNET USE

Over the last 15 years, most young people in Croatia have had Internet access, with these numbers growing continuously. 98 per cent of study respondents had everyday Internet access in 2018 (only four per cent more compared to 2012). The fact that the average time of 3.49 hours a day spent online has seen only a mild increase is therefore not surprising. At the same time, the average time of devoted daily to watching television has decreased to 2.26 hours, down from 2.48 six years previously (Ilišin et al. 2013). Accordingly, one hour a day was devoted to watching television by 28 per cent and to Internet use by 15 per cent of youth, whereas four and more hours were spent watching television by 15 per cent and online by 30 per cent of youth. These data are indicative of not only a continuous – although not drastic – retreat of the medium of television in the context of the upsurge in Internet use, but also of the emergence of potential Internet addiction in some youth subgroups. No statistically significant differences were found in this respect with regard to age, gender, level of education of respondents or their fathers, which suggests that Internet use is evenly distributed among Croatian youth. On the other hand, watching television did correlate with the level of education of respondents (F-ratio=15.30) and their fathers (F-ratio=18.01): it was above-average among youth with three-year vocational upper-secondary-level education whose fathers had the lowest levels of education, and below-average among respondents who had completed four-year upper-secondary-level education and those with higher-education-level fathers.

As is shown in Figure 10.2, the predominant purpose of Internet use is to communicate using social networks and Skype, Viber, and the like (which have seen a 28-per cent rise since 2012). Besides communication, most respondents also used the Internet to download or listen to music, for education or work purposes, to read the news or find information (which has seen an 11-per cent decrease in the past six years), sharing pictures, video and music, and sending and receiving e-mail (which has dropped by nine per cent). About one-third of youth stated that they often downloaded or watched videos or films and played games, while one-fifth used the Internet for online banking, and the least share used it to comment on products or services or shop online⁹¹.

FIGURE 10.2: Purposes of Internet use (%)



The purposes of Internet use examined were grouped into three categories using factor analysis. Factor 1 was dubbed *utilitarian purposes*, factor 2 *downloading and sharing content*, and factor 3 was called *communication purposes*.⁹² *Utilitarian purposes* of Internet use increased with age (F-ratio=50.51), and particularly with the level of education of respondents (F-ratio=124.83) and their fathers (F-ratio=35.77).

Downloading and sharing content was above-average among youth who had completed lower-secondary-level education (F-ratio=7.33) and had higher-education-level fathers (F-ratio=6.54), while the opposite was observed among respondents who had completed a three-year vocational upper-secondary-level education and among those whose fathers have the same level of education. This factor was particularly prevalent among male respondents (t-ratio=-6.01), and tended to decline with age (F-ratio=16.79). *Communication purposes* of Internet use were more prevalent among female than male respondents (t=2.75), and below-average among respondents with lowest-educated fathers (F-ratio=7.6). These findings suggest a slightly higher homogeneity of respondents than that in the case of leisure: it can thus be presumed that the level of maturation and education and social background contributes considerably to the formation of a critical outlook and selective use of Internet content.

VIRTUAL AND REAL FRIENDS

In the context of only two per cent of youth never accessing social networks, it is logical to expect that almost all young people have established networks of virtual friends. Research data shows that the least share of youth (ten per cent) had 50 or less social network friends, and the largest share (44 per cent) had 51–200 friends. 26 per cent of respondents had 201–500 friends, 14 per cent had 500 or more, and 19 per cent did not know or did not provide an answer. These results suggest that the majority of Croatian youth are not inclined to create a large circle of virtual friends (200 and above). The number of virtual friends was also found to increase with the level of respondents' education ($\chi^2=26.43$).

As expected, the number of respondents' virtual friends who also happened to be their (real) friends in everyday life was much smaller. Namely, 19 per cent of respondents had up to five such friends, the same percentage had 6–10, 21 per cent had 11–20, 22 per cent had more than 20 such friends, and 19 per cent did not know or did not have such friends. A calculation of the average number of real-life friends from social networks, which amounted to 23, was another indicator of a "real-life-friends-inflation" of sorts. In this case, no variations were found in the number of real-life friends from social networks with regard to respondents' traits. Despite the widespread access to social networks, respondents were divided in their perception of whether these networks handled their personal data responsibly. In this respect, 32 per cent of respondents considered social networks to be completely or mostly untrustworthy, 33 per cent considered them both trustworthy and not, 28 thought that their data was being used responsibly, and seven per cent did not know. This mild inclination to believe that social networks do not behave responsibly also rose slightly with the level of education of respondents ($\chi^2=20.55$) and their fathers ($\chi^2=33.38$).

TRANSITION TRAJECTORIES OF MAJOR LIFE EVENTS

Transition from youth into adulthood is marked by key events, such as completing one's education, finding employment, and starting a family of one's own. According to this research data, 48 per cent of Croatian youth had completed their formal education (most commonly at the age of 18), 45 per cent had found full-time jobs (at 21), 19 per cent had left their parental home (at 22), 18 per cent had moved in with their partner (at 23), 13 per cent had been married (at 24), and 12 per cent had had at least one child (at the age of 24). Consequently, and consistently with the prolonged youth phenomenon, the majority of Croatian youth had yet to experience their key life events. Table 10.1.

shows the most common (median) age of key life events for Croatian youth with respect to gender and level of education.

These stages clearly suggest a synchronised pattern of growing up and social maturation, or entering adulthood. Especially indicative is the tendency for a prolonged education process to also delay other key life events that mark the transition to adulthood. However, a patriarchal matrix also emerged, according to which young women experienced key life events, especially those related to having families of their own (getting married and becoming parents) at a somewhat younger age than their male counterparts. In contrast to this trend, women tend to complete their formal education at a slightly later age than men: this is a consequence of the increased number of women attaining higher levels of education.

TABLE 10.1: Age of key life events by gender and level of education

Life events	Sex		Educational level			
	Female	Male	Primary school	Vocational secondary school	Secondary school	University
Finished formal education (school / college / university)	19	18	16	18	18	24
Started first temporary job	21	21	17	20	20	24
Completely moved out of parents' household	22	23	17	22	22	24
Started living with partner	22	24	20	22	22	25
Got married	23	25	22	23	24	25
Had first child	23	25	22	23	24	26

11

CONCLUSIONS

This *FES Youth Studies Southeast Europe 2018* Croatia report is based on the findings of research conducted on youth 14–29 years of age, and was carried out in 2018 throughout Croatia. The findings were compared with those from the 2012 round of research (Ilišin et al. 2013), but also with other similar studies, enabling us to track trends as well as establish tendencies in the attitudes and behaviours of youth since the preceding time period.

Research findings were interpreted and presented throughout eight thematic units: this final section aims to summarise and recapitulate the main insights in order to outline the sociological profile of youth in Croatia, as well as the ensuing problems of this generation and how they might be addressed.

This study confirms that young people face various structural obstacles on their way to adulthood, and that their success is more likely to depend on family support and resources than on a social environment conducive to an unobstructed transition from youth to adulthood. Social opportunities, especially educational opportunities, as well as an individual's social standing, are in many ways determined by their social background, all of which suggests impeded social mobility.

A lower-secondary-level education was completed, or in the process of being completed, by one in four respondents in the study, while one in ten had completed three-year upper-secondary-level education. Every second respondent had a four-year upper-secondary level of education, and less than one-fifth had attained a degree at the level of higher education. Respondents mostly lived in urban areas, whereas two-fifths lived in rural parts of the country. With respect to housing, an average respondent's family home had three rooms and four household members, with three-quarters of participants having a room of their own. This percentage was considerably lower compared to the previous round of research, when nine out of ten respondents had a room of their own. In terms of financial resources, a relative majority deemed their household to have enough financial resources to cover basic existential needs, but not enough to be able to afford more expensive items like household appliances: this suggests that

a considerable portion of Croatian youth and their families are experiencing a shortage of financial resources and implies that they live in circumstances of economic insecurity.

Slightly less than three-quarters of respondents were living in their family home; the same living situation was reported by half the participants from the oldest age cohort (25 and above), which suggests difficulties in achieving socioeconomic independence. Two-thirds of respondents considered living with their parents to be the simplest solution, but one-quarter stated that they would move out if a (financial) opportunity presented itself. Consequently, social support for youth in becoming independent and having families of their own should include synchronised and complementary policies in different social sectors, from youth employment and housing policy to a spatial and financial infrastructure required for a good-quality family life, and the like. With regard to family life projections, most youth would prefer to be married with children, whom they would raise in the same way they were raised themselves – in most cases, this means an authoritative style of parenting. Considerable gender differentiation was noted in attitudes on family topics: female respondents turned out to be significantly more permissive with regard to the traditionalist pattern, despite espousing significantly less adherence to patriarchal values than their male peers.

Despite a considerable share of youth being satisfied with the quality of education in Croatia, the country's educational system was for the most part considered ill-adapted to labour market needs; everyday classes in educational institutions were perceived as stressful and demanding. The social structure of those pursuing tertiary education indicates an underrepresented number of youth from less privileged social backgrounds, which in turn suggests a need for structural reform which would facilitate the availability of (particularly tertiary) education to all youth regardless of their socioeconomic background.

High youth unemployment rates in Croatia pose obstacles and challenges in their daily lives, particularly in terms of transitioning toward emancipation. Despite the fact that things have changed

for the better since the last round of research six years ago, less than half of young Croatians were working in their profession. Half the respondents did not have a secure or permanent job; their average working weeks were longer than the legal standard, and their salaries were lower than the country's average. In terms of preferred qualities of a current or future job, the top ranking was the exact opposite of the precarious work market, which is expanding at present: job security.

The biggest fear and worry noted among youth was unemployment, and the highest value was independence: this addresses the biggest problem and most pronounced need of youth today. With respect to values, besides a mild increase in religiosity, Croatian youth espouse inclinations toward nationalism and, in slightly greater measure, authoritarianism (especially in the political sense). Exclusive attitudes toward particular social groups remain in place, as do reservations about the idea of Croatia as a multicultural society. Nevertheless, Croatian youth did not support the idea of assimilation, at least not when it comes to potential immigrants. They acknowledged the influence and importance of clientelism, or even corruption, in various spheres of life, such as educational institutions. Influential friends and acquaintances were deemed to be the most important factor in finding a good job and being successful in Croatian society in general. Likewise, not surprisingly, young people espoused a considerable level of tolerance for certain uncivil and opportunistic types of behaviour. Three things are implied by this finding: first, justifying types of behaviour that promote one's own interests at the expense of others who do not use "social shortcuts" is a probable indication of a normative potential for further expansion and perpetuation of this type of uncivil behaviour and tolerance thereof among the new generation of youth. Second, these findings reflect the existing culture of opportunism, which pushes aside the notion of general or public good and prioritises short-sighted, crude self-interest. Third, the prevalence of a benevolent view of clientelism and leveraging one's connections is an indicator of the weakness of social institutions across the board, including political entities, in sanctioning uncivil behaviours. Moreover, it is an indicator of the failure of these institutions in fulfilling their mission toward citizens, who are finding that circumventing institutional procedures and rules to attend to daily matters and needs seems to be a more effective and "normal" option.

Youth attitudes toward political affairs are characterised by a low level of interest and knowledge of political matters, a moderate level of engagement in some segments of formal political life and commensurately poor involvement in various citizens' actions and initiatives, an uneven acceptance of liberal-democratic values, a strong preoccupation with socioeconomic issues and problems, and a pronounced distrust of political institutions. Especially indicative is the finding that two-fifths of Croatian youth felt their generation to be socially discriminated against, whereas the majority also felt it to be politically marginalised. Integral research insight suggests that to a considerable extent youth are distancing themselves from political affairs, which could be inter-

preted as an indicator of their general disenchantment with politics as an activity which is supposed to ensure a good quality life for all members of a given community. Furthermore, young people were dissatisfied with the political system as well as with those in power, who they felt disregarded the needs and opinions of their generation. On the other hand, our research findings also suggest that the civic political culture of youth in Croatia is underdeveloped: in this respect, existing democratic deficits can be traced to inadequate political socialisation of youth. What is needed, therefore, is for young people to be appropriately educated in order to develop their democratic potential and civic competences, as well as for awareness to be raised regarding the importance of formal and informal types of political participation of all citizens, including youth, in order to achieve their goals and thereby improve the quality of democracy in the country. In this respect, it would appear necessary to reconsider an adequate conceptualisation and implementation of civics classes in Croatia's lower and upper-secondary-level education system. Political actors and civil society organisations ought to create adequate space for increased public participation of youth, targeting them specifically so as to motivate them to take more action in addressing the needs and interests of their generation as well as society in general.

The issue of migrations, especially in the sense of a youth drain abroad, is very widely discussed in Croatia. Almost two-thirds of Croatian youth do not wish to emigrate: compared to 2012, this represents a 20 per cent increase in respondents who see their future primarily in Croatia. At the same time, one-tenth of youth did express a very strong and strong desire to leave the country, which constitutes a potentially solid basis for moving, whereas a similar number were planning to emigrate in the following six months. The main reasons given for moving were primarily economic in nature. In terms of geographical preferences, no significant changes were noted between the 2018 and 2012 rounds of research, as Germany remains the top choice for potential Croatian immigrants. Capacities for keeping youth from leaving the country are low: on the one hand, many economic indicators are working against the socioeconomic position of youth, and on the other, there are ample opportunities available to enter the labour markets of many European Union member states. The main reasons for leaving reported by respondents suggest that Croatia primarily needs structural economic reform to facilitate employment, better jobs, job security and higher income: in short, a better living standard for the young population. It is to be expected that any future insecurity or erosion of the socioeconomic position of youth and their families will result in their being more willing to leave the country. The losses incurred due to their potential emigration can only be offset by policies designed to encourage return migration, particularly of the higher-education-level population, as well as toward opening the country to immigrants and a deliberate immigration policy.

Croatian youth were found to spend their leisure time in patterns similar to those established in earlier studies: this means that most of their free time was still devoted to entertaining and

relaxing activities, such as spending time with family and friends, listening to music and watching films, and going out to cafés and bars. Only a minority engaged in personal growth and development activities. The relatively high percentage of youth claiming not to engage in any type of sports activities suggests a need to animate and involve youth in various forms of physical recreation, particularly those who completed their formal education and no longer had an established infrastructure for physical activities. Almost all of Croatia's young population have everyday Internet access: they mostly use it to communicate on various platforms and share audio and video content, and slightly less often for utilitarian purposes. As they mature and acquire higher-education skills, young people also develop a more selective and critical relationship toward particular content and activities in their leisure time and the virtual world alike. Their strong orientation toward particular types of Internet content and social networking suggests a need to develop digital literacy in order to increase their Internet competence for a wide array of educational purposes, and to develop a critical stance toward Internet content, especially in terms of a responsible placement of personal data.

Given that youth as a social group are characterised by internal social stratification and varying demographic traits, all of which are reflected in their attitudes and patterns of behaviour, this study examined, along with other characteristics specific for a subject area, intragenerational differentiation with respect to gender differences, maturation (age), social competence (education), and social background or social status (fathers' level of education). Age was found to closely correlate with education, as various levels of

education were also assumed to be correlated with corresponding social competences. As earlier research has shown, this means that respondents with higher levels of education were also more clearly defined and selective when choosing available resources in various spheres of life (Ilišin et al. 2013). This study thus also found that higher-education-level individuals or those coming from more privileged social backgrounds tended to be more liberal, tolerant, critical of the real world, and even more satisfied with life. On the other hand, respondents from younger cohorts and lower levels of education tended to lean toward traditionalism in the most general sense (from their views on gender roles to their attitudes toward immigrants), which was also found to significantly correlate with a lower level of fathers' education or lower social background of respondents. Social background also determined one's social values and level of social sensitivity in general. Namely, respondents from lower social backgrounds were more supportive of notions of social justice and more sensitive to social inequality. In particular issues, gender proved to be a differentiating factor in attitudes and behaviours, particularly in the area of family values and risk behaviours: female respondents were more egalitarian in their views on gender roles.

Finally, research insight re-confirmed the primacy and role of the primary family in the social integration of youth. Socioeconomic and sociocultural conditions surrounding maturation, primarily including family resources in the most general sense, remain the most determining factor in the choices available for young people, and ultimately support existing, and produce new, social inequalities at the societal level.

FOOTNOTES

[1] The analysis comprised only participants who were no longer enrolled in an educational programme (N=719).

[2] It should be noted that this indicator does not imply the concrete financial value of things owned on the one hand, but can indicate a lifestyle on the other. For instance, the number of real estate properties or cars owned does not automatically imply their high financial value. Also, owning a car, motorcycle or bicycle also points to a certain lifestyle and not merely to the financial or economic power of a participant and their parents.

[3] According to the Eurostat definition, the indicator of material deprivation or severe material deprivation expresses the inability to pay for or financially secure three or four out of the following nine items: to pay the rent, mortgage or utility bills; to keep the home adequately warm; to face unexpected expenses; to eat meat or proteins regularly; to go on holiday; a television set; a washing machine; a car; a telephone (Eurostat statistic explained http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Glossary:Material_deprivation).

[4] Ordinal variables of material deprivation or material goods ownership were recoded into binary variables (owns/does not own) and then transformed into an additive index. All ten available questionnaire items were owned by ten per cent of the participants; nine were owned by a quarter; eight were owned by another quarter; seven were owned by 22 per cent; six were owned by ten per cent; and the least number of participants (around six per cent) owned up to five items from the questionnaire. The mean of material goods ownership index was eight.

[5] It should be noted that the concrete question in the youth study referred to material ownership among the respondents as well as their parents, irrespectively of the current family status of the respondents.

[6] Eurostat [ilc_mdmsd07].

[7] Eurostat [ilc_mddd11].

[8] A methodology note is in order here: the questionnaire item on material ownership referred both to the respondents and their parents, whereas the financial-means assessment question referred to the household in which the participants currently resided, and which did not necessarily correspond to the material situation in the parental home if the participants did not live with their parents (71 per cent of participants did reside with their parents at the time of research).

[9] Eurostat (2015) <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/3217494/6776245/KS-05-14-031-EN-N.pdf/18bee6f0-c181-457d-ba82-d77b314456b9>.

[10] Bearing in mind that one's level of education greatly determines one's position on the social scale, cultural capital continues, in line with Bourdieu's theory, to be a powerful factor of social reproduction, that is, of the preservation of stability or even the above-mentioned "low permeability" of the existing social structure.

[11] The 2012 round of research found all categories, including households with no books whatsoever, to be equally represented, albeit with a greater share of participants with more books as well as those with none at all (in 2012, 15 per cent of participants did not own any books, compared to three per cent in 2018). These discrepancies can be attributed to variations in how the questions were formulated, since the latter round of research emphasised the conditions of socialisation and internalisation of family cultural capital, and not general book ownership at the time of research.

[12] Eurostat [tessi171].

[13] Compared to 2012, when fewer young people were living with their partners or spouses (11 per cent), there has apparently been an eight per cent increase in the number of cohabitation/marriage-based households.

[14] It is evident from the trend that Croatia is no exception from the rest of Europe, which displayed a growing number of youth living in their parental homes, especially after the global crisis. However, this European trend did not reach the same proportions as it did in Croatia, where it results from high youth unemployment rates in the past period as well as from the phenomenon of prolonged youth, all of which has hindered young people on their path to independence. At the same time, this is not merely a question of structural issues, but also of culture, as Croatia belongs to the group of countries where one-person households are simply not as common as they are in Northern European countries, where single living has been a trend since the 1950s (*Euronews* 2017). This is corroborated by data, according to which eight per cent of youth paid their rent from their own income, whereas five per cent have embarked on buying their own real estate. This is a low percentage, considering that Croatia holds third place in real-estate ownership at 90.1 per cent in the EU-28 (*Eurostat* 2017) and that buying real estate is a common life decision and a symbolic gesture that an individual has "settled down," "self-actualised," and started living independently. In addition, owning one's own home is "the goal of all goals" in Croatian culture, as evidenced by data indicating a stagnation in Croatia's population (1971-2004), but a simultaneous rise in the number of items of real estate owned (Filipić 2007). As was expected, the majority of respondents aged 19 or younger were living in their parental homes,

as were one-half of participants over 25 years of age ($\chi^2=303.13$). Those living with their parents most commonly included lower-secondary school attendees or those with a completed four-year upper-secondary education ($\chi^2=303.13$). The category of youth who bought their homes independently mostly included those with the highest levels of education; this cohort also tended to be living on properties which were either gifts, inherited or rented and financed on their own, and were also the least likely to be living with their parents ($\chi^2=153.26$). The apparent conclusion from this is that young people of a higher social status are more likely to have an opportunity to achieve an independent life, which is for the most part unattainable for those on the lowest rungs of the social ladder.

[15] *Authoritative parenting style* scale contains the following variables: Parents explained to me why I should obey rules; I was allowed to take part in creating family rules; My parents were aware of my concerns in school. *Authoritarian parenting style* scale contains following variables: I was slapped if I misbehaved; If I did not meet my parents expectations, I was scolded and criticised; My parents yelled or shouted at me if I misbehaved. The permissive parenting style scale contains the following variables: If I caused a commotion about something, parents usually gave in to my wish; I was given rewards (toys, candies...) in order to behave good; My parents threatened me with punishments that were never implemented in practice.

[16] In particular, a correlation was found between parenting styles and behavioural disorders, while adolescents who consider their parents' parenting style to be "constructive" have fewer socialisation issues and experience less social exclusion (Chen and Kaplan 2001, after Ferić-Šlehan 2008). This is particularly relevant when it comes to the authoritative parenting style, which presupposes parental boundaries and oversight on the one hand, and provides the child with emotional warmth and support on the other (Čudina-Obradović and Obradović 2006), and which seemed to predominate among the participants in this round of research.

[17] Furthermore, the study assessed the extent to which parents influence young people in making important life choices. Almost half of the participants (48 per cent) made their decisions jointly with their parents, which was not significantly different from 2012, when 45 per cent reported the same. 42 per cent of youth reported making decisions independently (compared to 46 per cent in 2012), while nine per cent claimed that their parents made all the decisions (compared to six per cent in 2012). Independent decision-makers mostly included respondents from the oldest age cohort ($\chi^2=337.59$), those with the highest levels of education and a completed three-year upper-secondary school ($\chi^2=277.40$), and those with the lowest-educated fathers ($\chi^2=25.57$).

[18] This is an unregistered partnership in which two people cohabit without being married, but have a relationship which resembles marriage.

[19] However, these are merely projections of future lives: according to their status at the time of research, the majority of the participants were single (61 per cent), while 19 per cent were in relationships. 13 per cent were married, and six per cent were cohabiting. Divorced and widowed participants accounted for less than one per cent of the population, which was to be expected due to their age. Obviously, the majority of the single participants were also among the youngest age cohorts, while those who were married tended to be older (25 and older) ($\chi^2=410.42$). When education characteristics are considered, the married cohort of youth mostly comprised those who had completed their process of education (three-year upper-secondary school), probably for that exact reason, while alternative forms of marriage were most likely to be the choice of highest-educated participants ($\chi^2=201.90$). Married participants for the most part had fathers with the lowest levels of education ($\chi^2=22.93$), while those cohabiting with partners had fathers with the highest levels of education.

[20] The 2012 study had found 26-29 to be the most desirable marrying age for women and 30 again for men, thus demonstrating that no significant shifts occurred between the two rounds of research. Compared to the average age of marriage for EU-28 youth (2015), data shows that women married at 29.9 years of age on average, while men married at 32.4, both significantly higher (*Eurostat* 2017). The average age of marriage has been increasing year after year, and the last two decades (*Eurostat* 2017) have also seen a constant gap between men's and women's age of marriage.

[21] Female participants who were mothers at the time of research had had their children at an earlier age (M=23.30) than their male counterparts (M=24.97) (t=-4.19), and most participants who were first-time parents were part of the oldest age cohort (F-ratio=29.91). Female respondents who were not mothers at the time of research intended to have their first child at an age different (M=27.72) than their male counterparts (M=29.38) (F-ratio=-7.46), with the preferred age to have one's first child differing between the middle and oldest and youngest age cohort (F-ratio=82.56). The oldest planned age to have a first child was stated by participants who were pursuing or had obtained a higher-education degree (F-ratio=14.41).

[22] Principal component analysis identified three factors, explaining 65.44 per cent of variance. After varimax rotation, the first factor explained 25.72 percent, the second factor 20.12 and the third factor 19.16 percent of variance of the variables included in the analysis. The factor configuration is as follows: the factor of *traditionalism* includes national origin (0.83) religious beliefs (0.80), family approval (0.71), virginity (0.65); factor of *socioeconomic capital*: economic status (0.84), level of education (0.83) and appearance (0.55); *psychological motivation pattern*: personality (0.86) and common interests (0.86).

[23] In the wider context of choosing one's future spouse/partner, participants' attitudes toward gender roles or normative expectations from women and men indicates the extent to which the young population has accepted and internalised traditional values or gender stereotypes. Some older as well as more recent studies in Croatia suggest that gender equality is, at least based on what respondents state, considered to be a fundamental value accepted by most people, although there are pronounced differences in the extent to which this value is accepted among men and women (Adamović and Maskalan 2017). Women tend to be greater advocates of gender equality because they face greater traditional expectations than men in terms of employment, care-giving for children and the elderly, chores and emotional labour (Milić 2007).

[24] Principal component analysis extracted one factor that explained 55.20 percent of variables' variance. This factor, referred to as *patriarchalism*, is saturated by the following variables: Family roles of men and women should be different because women should be primarily devoted to household and child care (0.85), It is not good if usual family roles change in the family and women start earning more money than men (0.84), There is no need for more women in positions of power in our society because women's primary role is to take care of the family (0.78), A man is the one who should earn and feed the family (0.76), Women are biologically predestined to be better at working with people such as teachers and caregivers than in technology and computer science (0.74), Women and men should share all household jobs equally such as cooking, ironing and cleaning (0.40). The last variable was negatively saturated; hence, the derived factor score was assigned a reverse effect.

[25] It should be noted that these data were flagged with a "low reliability" label by EUROSTAT.

[26] The number of youth who responded to this question was N=531. Multiple answers were an option, with the frequency of responses totalling 593.

[27] The period between 2012 and 2018 also saw an increase in average study time outside of school or after classes. There was a drop in the share of respondents studying 0-1 hour a day from 31 per cent to 19 per cent and those studying 1-2 hours from 27 per cent to 25 per cent, and a simultaneous rise in the share of respondents studying 2-3 hours from 27 to 33 per cent and those who study more than three hours a day from 15 to 23 per cent. The share of students with average grades of 4-5 went up by five per cent (from 32 per cent in 2012 to 37 per cent in 2018), with a dip in those with average grades of 3-4 (from 49 to 48 per cent) and average grades of 2-3 (from 19 to 15 per cent). Analysis showed the biggest differences between average grade groups to be a direct consequence of the average number of daily study hours among respondents ($\chi^2=32.12$): those who study more than three hours a day also tend to have higher average grades. Differences were observable in gender as well, as young women were more likely to study three or more hours a day than young men ($\chi^2=26.37$) and more likely to receive higher average grades than young men ($\chi^2=24.72$) in the academic year preceding the research. In addition to the time spent studying, an increase in stress among the population was also reflected in average grade differences from the academic year preceding the study ($\chi^2=16.44$), as increased levels of stress were correlated with lower average grades. Respondents who found their schooling easy and stressful were more likely to achieve average grades of 4-5, while those who found school to be "hard and stressful to some extent" tended to have average grades of 3-4, and those whose schooling was hard and stressful were likely to have average grades of 2-3.

[28] These findings are corroborated by similar results produced in the Eurostudent IV (Farnell 2011) and Eurostudent V surveys (Šćukanec and Sinković 2016). These highlight the correlation between parents' attainment of higher-education levels and their children's decision to pursue tertiary education, as well as the overrepresentation of students from families with parents who have completed higher education. Moreover, children of higher-education-level parents have usually completed upper-secondary-level grammar schools, whereas children of parents with basic education tend to graduate from upper-secondary-level vocational schools. A little over a third of students described their financial difficulties as serious or very serious; within this group, over half of the respondents had parents with lower-secondary or the lowest level of education. On the other hand, students who experienced little or no financial difficulties tended to come from families with parents who have completed higher education: about two-fifths had such backgrounds (Šćukanec and Sinković 2016).

[29] According to this study, as many as 74.5 per cent of Croatian youth still live with their parents, ranking highest in Europe in terms of leaving their family

homes at 31.4 of age on average, which is ten years behind Scandinavian countries (source: Eurostat [yth_demo_030] available at http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/en/web/products-datasets/-/YTH_DEMO_030, accessed on 18 February 2018). According to our research, as many as 82.2 per cent of youth cite financial reasons as the main obstacle to their independence in terms of their dwelling arrangements.

[30] Source: Eurostat [yth_empl_010].

[31] Source: Eurostat [yth_empl_090].

[32] Source: Eurostat [edat_lfse_20].

[33] Other types of associations featured in the questionnaire accounted for less than ten per cent of youth engaging in voluntary work: non-governmental organisations (seven per cent), citizens' initiatives (six per cent), emergency and rescue services (five per cent), political parties (three per cent) and unions (one per cent).

[34] Other religions and denominations were scarcely represented among youth: two per cent self-identified as Muslim, and one per cent as Eastern Orthodox.

[35] Religiosity or religious self-identification has varied among Croatian youth from 1999 onwards: the period between 1999 and 2004 saw a surge (from 66 to 73 per cent), followed by a slump to 60 per cent in 2013 (Ilišin and Radin 2002; Ilišin and Radin 2007; Ilišin and Spajić Vrkaš 2017), and a new ascent to 69 per cent in 2018. In other words, the dynamics of youth religiosity have fluctuated between negative and positive over the past twenty years, being on the rise over the past five years (from 2013) to reach approximately the same level as in 2000.

[36] Respondents mostly described their parents as moderately religious (37 per cent), followed by predominantly religious (26 per cent) and very religious (20 per cent). Since the scales for religiosity assessment of parents and self-identification of respondents were not the same, it is not possible to establish possible differences between respondents and their parents in this respect.

[37] The religiosity scale used was from the World Values Survey and contained three variables: the importance of God in respondents' lives; the frequency of attending religious services; and the religiosity of respondents' parents.

[38] Principal component analysis extracted four factors, however due to variables saturated with more than one factor, the following variables were not subjected to further analysis: Graduating from university, Being faithful to employer and Healthy eating. The final four factors obtained by varimax rotation explained in total of 64.86 percent of variance, of which the first factor – 22.50 percent, second factor – 14.21 percent, and fourth factor – 13.92 percent. The first, the *emancipatory-relational factor*, contains the following variables: Being independent (0.74), Taking responsibility (0.70), Being faithful to friends (0.73), Having a successful career (0.65), Being faithful to partner (0.66). The second factor, *family traditionalism*, consists of: Getting/being married (0.87), Having children (0.83). The third factor, sociopolitical activity, contains: *Participating in civic actions/initiatives* (0.85), *Being active in politics* (0.77), *Doing sports* (0.63). The fourth factor, *materialism and status symbols*: Wearing branded clothes (0.76), Getting/being rich (0.71), Looking good (0.68).

[39] By comparison, acceptance of emancipatory-relational values was significantly higher than that of traditional values ($t=11.56$). Also, an emancipatory-relational value orientation was more prevalent among higher-education-level respondents than among those who had completed a four-year upper secondary-level education (F -ratio=8.02), but also among respondents whose fathers had lower levels of education (three-year vocational upper-secondary schools) more than among those with fathers who had completed higher education (F -ratio=5.24). The latter may be an indicator of a greater ambition toward self-actualisation and realising one's potential among youth who come from less privileged social backgrounds, but who have surpassed their parents' levels of education. In addition, this dimension correlates with religious self-identification (F -ratio=15.84), proving to be significantly more important to non-religious respondents than to those who identified themselves as undecided and religious.

[40] Analysis of the principal components extracted two factors, which explained a total of 66.50 per cent of the variance in the variables assessed. After rotation, the first factor explained 35.73 per cent, and the second 30.77 per cent.

[41] The first factor *fear of various forms of violence* contains the following variables: Being a victim of physical violence (0.86), Getting robbed by someone (0.84), Terrorist attack (0.78), War in the region / the world (0.73), Getting seriously ill (0.70), Too many immigrants and refugees (0.66); the second factor, *fear of socioeconomic decline*, consisted of: Social injustice (0.79), Corruption (0.79), Increasing poverty in society (0.78), Pollution and climate change (0.73), Having no job (0.54).

[42] On the three-point scale (1 – not at all; 2 – somewhat; 3 – very), the average value of the first scale of fear of various forms of violence was 2, and that of the second scale of socioeconomic decline was 2.2.

[43] Despite existing concerns and fears, the majority of respondents were generally satisfied with their living situation, primarily with their life in general and their family life (78 per cent), and with their circle of friends (74 per cent). The last five-year period could be described as seeing a rise in general life satisfaction, since

66 per cent of respondents were satisfied with their lives in the 2013 study (Ilišin and Gvozdanović 2017). On the other hand, satisfaction with friends or friendships has slumped since 2012 (Ilišin et al. 2013), dropping from a high of 94 per cent to almost 20 per cent less in 2018. Two-thirds of respondents (69 per cent) were satisfied with their education, and more than half (57 per cent) were happy with their jobs. The variables assessed make up a factor of general life satisfaction, which was found to significantly correlate with gender ($t=3.17$), with female respondents expressing a higher level of life satisfaction. The factor was also significantly correlated with the levels of education of respondents ($F\text{-ratio}=6.06$) and their fathers ($F\text{-ratio}=6.52$), being highest among youth with tertiary education and those whose fathers who had completed a four-year secondary education, especially compared to respondents with lowest-educated fathers. In short, we can conclude that life satisfaction is related to social status and quality of life as its probable effect. Likewise, respondents with lower levels of education (three-year upper-secondary schools) and those coming from lower socioeconomic backgrounds (fathers with lower-secondary education) expressed a significantly lower level of life satisfaction.

[44] As opposed to their own future, young people were somewhat more cautious about the future of society: 45 per cent believed that society would be in better shape ten years down the line, while one-tenth were pessimistic in this respect. Over a third (36 per cent) believed that the future of society would be rather similar to the present, while eight per cent could not say or were not able to. Respondents who had attained higher education had a significantly more pessimistic perspective ($\chi^2=25.39$), as did the oldest cohort, aged 25 to 29 ($\chi^2=7.76$).

[45] Attitudes toward ex-convicts and drug addicts were not featured in the 2012 questionnaire.

[46] In the 2012 round of research, 24 per cent of respondents were accepting of Roma families as neighbours, compared to 16 per cent in 2018, whereas 27 per cent of respondents were accepting of homosexual persons or couples as neighbours, compared to 37 per cent in 2018 (Ilišin et al. 2013).

[47] Analysis of principal components extracted two factors with 65.20 variance explained. After varimax rotation, the first factor explained 35.86 per cent of the variance, and the second explained 29.34 per cent of the variance of the analysed variables.

[48] The first factor contained the following variables: Retired couple (0.84), Family from Western Europe (0.80), Local family with many children (0.80), Group of students (0.78). The second factor consisted of: Drug addicts (0.87), Ex-prisoners (0.85), Roma family (0.72), Refugees (0.57), Homosexual person or couple (0.52).

[49] The F-scale contains following items on scale from 1 to 5 (1-completely disagree, 5-completely agree): What young people need most of all is strict discipline by their parents ($M=3$); An insult to one's honour should never be forgotten ($M=3.2$); Most people who don't get ahead just don't have enough willpower ($M=3.3$); We should have a leader who rules Croatia with a strong hand for the public good ($M=3.5$).

[50] The scale of nationalism consists of the following variables on a scale from 1 to 5 (1-completely disagree, 5-completely agree): It would be best if Croatia was inhabited only by real Croats ($M=2.6$); Non-Croats living in Croatia should adopt Croatian customs and values ($M=3.3$); The real Croat is only a person who has Croatian blood ($M=2.8$).

[51] For the sake of simplicity in the factor structure, the following variable was excluded: I can see myself in an amicable relationship with a person of a different race, religion, or nationality. After the exclusion, analysis extracted two factors, with 66.52 per cent variance explained. After varimax rotation, the first factor explained 45.03 per cent of the variance, while the second factor explained 21.50 per cent of the variance.

[52] The factor *accepting multiculturalism* contains: It is good for Croatia to be inhabited by people of different ethnicities, religions and cultures (0.85), Migration of people from other countries to Croatia are beneficial for Croatian economy (0.87), People from other countries who would come to live here would enrich Croatian culture (0.88). The factor of *cultural conservatism* consists of: Preserving the national identity must be one of the main governmental goals (0.77), People who move to Croatia should give up their customs and completely adapt to Croatian customs and traditions. (0.69).

[53] Thus, 12 per cent of respondents were discriminated against because of their age, eight per cent because of their economic status and gender, and seven per cent because of their educational level. The least frequent experiences of discrimination were due to cultural traits: five per cent of respondents were sometimes discriminated against because of their regional background and political and religious beliefs, respectively, three per cent because of their social engagement and ethnic background, respectively, and a mere one per cent because of their sexual orientation. Analysis of main components extracted one factor, representing the dimension of *discrimination experience*. Those who were more likely to feel or recognise the experience of discrimination were women ($t=2.6$), those with

higher levels of education (higher education) ($F\text{-ratio}=3.03$), and those from the oldest age cohort (25-25) ($F\text{-ratio}=6.45$).

[54] The *Declaration on the Homeland War*, adopted by the Croatian National Parliament in 2000 (NN 102/2000), officially described the nature of the War of Independence in the following way: "The Republic of Croatia waged a just and legitimate, defensive and liberating war, and not a war of aggression or conquest toward anyone, in which it defended its territory from Greater-Serbian aggression within its internationally recognised borders," defining the official political discourse on the country's recent past.

[55] Principal component analysis extracted three factors which explained 58.23 per cent of the variance. However, the item in public debates about Homeland war, the possibility for all citizens to publicly declare their opinions/attitudes should be limited was saturated with two factors and was hence excluded from the analysis. After its exclusion, three factor had an eigenvalue greater than 1, but between the eigenvalues of the second and third factors there was a significant difference and therefore, according to Scree test, two factors were retained. The extracted factors explained in total 50.07 per cent of variance for variables included in the analysis and after varimax rotation, the first factor explained 27.42 per cent, and second factor 22.65 per cent of variance. First factor contains following variables: To me, the Homeland war is sacred and it should not be criticised or questioned (0.81), The biggest sacrifice in war was delivered by Croatian defenders so all of their requirements towards the state should be granted (0.78), Every attempt to persecute Croatian soldiers for possible crimes committed during the Homeland War should be stopped (0.74), The topic of Homeland war is frequently discussed/talked about in my family (0.72), I think I am well acquainted with the events that happened during the Homeland war (0.70), I regularly follow media coverage of Homeland war topics (0.67), All citizens who were victims of war regardless of nationality deserve equal respect (0.40). The second factor contains: Addressing the recent past should only be left up to historians (0.78), I think that in Croatia there is too much discussion about the Homeland War instead of the present and future development of the country (0.71), I am not interested in topics related to the Homeland war and recent past (0.68), Today, the coexistence of Croats and Serbs is possible in areas in Croatia that were once affected by hostilities (0.67), In Croatia, the use of the language and script of national minorities should be allowed in official offices of state institutions (eg, Cyrillic in Vukovar) (0.66), Most of my knowledge about the Homeland war I gained at school (0.60).

[56] Analysis of principal components extracted two factors, with 69.20 per cent variance explained. After rotation, the first factor explained 41.90 per cent, and the second 27.3 per cent of the variance of assessed variables.

[57] "Connections" have been perceived as a predominant success factor by youth for over a decade (Ilišin and Radin 2007; Ilišin and Spajić Vrkaš 2017). In comparison, the hierarchy of perceived social values does not seem to have changed dramatically in the past five years. Certain shifts were detected, however, in terms of almost all values registering lower on the scale in 2018 than they did in 2013. These shifts were revealed in rankings, with the following ranking higher than five years ago: fairness to others (11th to sixth place); higher-education degrees (seventh to fourth place), knowledge and skills (fifth to second place). These data seem to outline a shift in perception of social game-changers, but it is up to future studies to determine whether value shifts have occurred or not.

[58] Principal component analysis identified three factors that explained 63.03 per cent of variance in total. The items Obedience and submission to superiors and Risk-taking were saturated with more than one factor and therefore were excluded from the analysis. Three factors were extracted which explained 64.85 per cent of variance of variables included in the analysis. After varimax rotation, the first factor explained 26.08 per cent, the second factor 21.38 per cent, and the third factor 17.39 per cent. The first factor, *majority group belonging and material resources possession*, consisted of the following variables: Belonging to the ethnic majority (0.78), Belonging to the religious majority (0.74), Personal and/or family wealth (0.70), Resourceful at any cost, cunning (0.70), Luck, favourable circumstances (0.69). The second factor, *personal competences*, contains: Professional responsibility and commitment to work (0.80), Acquired knowledge and skills (0.79), Honesty, justice and fairness to others (0.73), Faculty diploma (0.66). The third factor, *uncivil types of behaviour*, consists of: Bribing influential persons (corruption) (0.84), Personal or family connections (0.74), Political suitability (0.68).

[59] Group belonging and material resources ownership ($M=3.5$) differentiated youth with regard to levels of education of respondents ($F\text{-ratio}=12.14$) as well as that of their fathers ($F\text{-ratio}=5.86$): respondents, and fathers, with lower levels of education assigned greater importance to material resources and belonging to an ethnic/religious group as success factors. The importance of personal competences was, on the other hand, significantly more prevalent among the youngest (14-19) than the oldest age cohort (25-29) ($F\text{-ratio}=6.26$), and among respondents whose fathers had completed three-year vocational upper-secondary education than those with higher-education-level fathers ($F\text{-ratio}=5.06$). No characteristics were found to be relevant in differentiating respondents in terms of their perception of uncivil types of behaviour as a success factor, meaning that this conviction was shared across structural and other characteristics of youth.

[60] As interesting as it was to note the inclination toward a (potential) authoritarian leader and firm leadership among youth and their simultaneous distrust of political leaders, these findings were not significantly correlated: authoritarian leader proclivities were not related to the level of trust espoused toward current political leaders (whose leadership was perhaps not considered firm enough).

[61] Analysis of the main components extracted two factors with characteristic values above 1; however, since variables referring to trusting political leaders and classmates/coworkers were saturated with both factors, they were excluded from the analysis. This was resolved with two factors, with a 64.45 per cent variance being explained. After rotation, the first factor explained 37.49 per cent, and the second 29.96 per cent of the assessed variables.

[62] The social trust factor contains: *People of other nationalities* (0.89), *People of other religions* (0.88), People with different political convictions (0.84), Neighbours (0.51) (mean of social trust scale is $M=3.2$). The second factor, particularised trust, refers to the following variables: Immediate family members (mother/father, sister/brother, wife/husband, partner) (0.85), Extended family members (relatives) (0.74), Friends (0.68) (the mean for the particularised trust scale is $M=4.2$).

[63] Below-average participation of youth in formal politics necessarily redirects scholarly attention to informal modes of political activism, which were initially observed as a sort of substitute or compensation for institutional political engagement. Research has shown that young people mostly prefer non-institutional political activities (such as demonstrations, boycotts, and petitions), also accompanied by voluntary and humanitarian work and engagement in civil-society organisations, which primarily address particular (concrete) social issues (Norris 2003; Quéniart 2008; Younnis and Levine 2009; Flanagan and Levine 2010; Grasso 2016). This outlined spectrum of social engagement with political connotations has recently been complemented by social network and web-portal activities, which were optimistically recognised as an easily accessible and very open platform for youth political engagement to expand (Benet 2008; Quintelier and Vissers 2008; Collin 2015; Cammaerts et al. 2016). This new context saw the emergence of new approaches based on the pluralisation of forms in contemporary youth political participation (Harris et al. 2010; Hustinx et al. 2012; Amna and Ekman 2013) entailing a combination of traditional and new forms of civic engagement.

[64] An important indicator of political interest and the role of politics in the everyday life of young people is how frequently political affairs are discussed in their families as well as with friends and acquaintances. The findings were consistent with the above-mentioned lack of political interest among Croatian youth: 54 per cent never discussed politics within their circles, whereas merely 18 per cent discussed politics "often" or "very often." Similar to the general interest in politics, political affairs were least discussed among groups of respondents who had (not) completed a lower-secondary education ($\chi^2=42.10$), and most frequently discussed by respondents who had completed bachelors' and masters' studies and had fathers who had attained higher education as well ($\chi^2=44.79$).

[65] Four-dimensional factor structure explained 59.79 per cent of variance in total and this is its configuration: *acceptance of democratic rules* (factor 1) includes attitudes regarding democracy being generally a good form of government (0.73), and that the duty of every citizen in democratic society is to vote (0.72); *acceptance of social conflict and dictatorship* (factor 2) consists of following variables: There are conflicts in every society, which can only be solved by violence (0.80), Under certain circumstances dictatorship is a better form of government than democracy (0.77), I know a lot about politics (0.74); *pointing out democratic deficits* (factor 3) consists of following variables: I don't think politicians care about young people's opinions (0.76), A strong party representing the common folk in general is what we need in Croatia right now (0.70), We should have a leader who rules Croatia with a strong hand for the public good (0.63), Young people should have more possibilities to speak out in politics (0.53).

[66] No statistically significant differences were noted between subgroups with regard to the importance of democracy, equality, and individual freedoms. On the other hand, employment registered as above-average among the oldest respondents ($\chi^2=9.47$) and was least present among those aged 20-24 and those who had completed a lower-secondary education ($\chi^2=12.35$), which was to be expected because they had the longest way to go before having to think about finding employment. The economic welfare of citizens ($\chi^2=7.60$) and human rights ($\chi^2=6.80$) had an above-average prevalence among female respondents. At the same time, rule of law registered above average as a value among more educated respondents ($\chi^2=20.95$) and below average among those with lower levels of education, whereas security was the most prevalent value among respondents who had completed three-year upper-secondary vocational training ($\chi^2=20.82$) and least prevalent among higher-education-level respondents.

[67] The above-mentioned data suggests that Croatian youth primarily perceive socioeconomic issues to be a burden. In this context, it was interesting to learn what they expected in terms of economic development of Croatian citizens ten years down the line. Our research found optimism to be present on a modest scale, with 34 per cent of respondents expecting the economic situation to get better, 40 per cent expecting it to stay the same (i.e. relatively adverse), 16 per

cent believing it would get worse, and ten per cent unable to say. Pessimism and optimism regarding Croatia's economic future were equally distributed among all youth subgroups.

[68] Principal component analysis extracted two factors with 68.80 per cent of variance in total. *Ensuring economic and democratic development* (factor 1) contains: Reduction of unemployment (0.85), Economic growth and development (0.85), Fight against crime and corruption (0.83), Social justice and social security for all (0.77), Improving the position of young people (0.75), Securing human rights and freedoms (0.72), Preservation of natural environment (0.62), Fostering population growth (0.61); *fostering national security and identity* (factor 2) includes: Strengthening of military power and national security (0.86), Fostering national identity (0.75), Fight against illegal immigration of people (0.73), Improving the position of women (0.60) and Development of private entrepreneurship (0.59).

[69] The same lowest-ranking entities were identified by the 2012 round of research (as did all other youth studies as well), suggesting a permanent crisis of trust in political institutions among Croatian youth. However, the continued top ranking of trust placed in the armed forces, police, and religious institutions also suggests an authoritarian orientation with certain militarist tendencies. The latter is probably an effect of the country's recent war-torn past, of the involvement of the armed forces in natural disaster relief, and of current police activity in protecting state borders from illegal immigrants, whereas trust in religious institutions is surely a product of the preponderance of religiosity among Croatia's population, and the pervasive presence of the Catholic Church in Croatian social life in general.

[70] The variance of three extracted factors was 63.94 per cent. *Pillars of political and economic power* (factor 1) include: Croatian parliament (0.83), Government (0.83), Political parties (0.82), Local government (0.71), President of the Republic (0.65), Banks (0.59), Judiciary (0.58) Big companies (0.53); *Civil sector and international organisations* (factor 2): Volunteer movements (0.73), NGO (0.70), UN (0.70), OSCE (0.69), IMF (0.61), EU (0.56), NATO (0.55) and Unions (0.55). *Repressive, media, and religious institutions* (factor 3) contains: Police (0.79), Army (0.76), Media (0.68) and Religious institutions (0.64).

[71] The prominent sense of national/ethnic identity is corroborated by data on the perception of Croatia in the international context. In this respect, 64 per cent of respondents were proud to be Croatian citizens (nine per cent did not emphasise this pride), 50 per cent thought that Croatian national interests were not emphasised enough in global politics (as opposed to 11 per cent of those who disagreed that this was the case), and 31 per cent hoped that Croatia's international importance would grow in the next few years (as opposed to 22 per cent of respondents not affirming this statement). At the same time, and in spite of the highly unfavourable current demographic situation in the country, only 20 per cent of respondents agreed (in contrast with 38 per cent who disagreed) that Croatia should take in more immigrants, whereas an even lesser share of 15 per cent agreed (in contrast with 43 per cent who disagreed) that the country should take in more refugees. All subgroups agreed that Croatian interests were not emphasised enough in global politics in equal measure. On the other hand, hospitality toward refugees ($\chi^2=20.09$) and immigrants ($\chi^2=20.09$) was least present among respondents who had completed three-year vocational upper-secondary-level education. The sense of pride in being a Croatian citizen was found to decrease in tandem with age ($\chi^2=14.25$), and the conviction that Croatia would assume a more important role on the international stage decreased with the respondents' level of education ($\chi^2=18.09$).

[72] A comparison of Croatian and EU-related data clearly reveals that most respondents deemed the EU to be superior to Croatia in terms of upholding virtually all the values examined, particularly emphasising the low employment and economic welfare of Croatian citizens as opposed to the comparable superiority of the European Union in this category. It should also be noted that, along with security and individual freedom, these values ranked as most important to respondents, meaning that they could be a factor in emigrating from their homeland to more developed European countries. Another value that Croatian youth found very important was security, making this the only exception working in Croatia's favour, which most probably resulted from the fact that, unlike some other European countries, Croatia had not been a target of terrorist attacks. At the same time, the lack of such an immediate traumatic experience could diminish its importance when competing with the need to address socioeconomic issues at the individual level.

[73] Principal component analysis extracted two factors which explained 71.82 per cent of joint variance. *Liberal-democratic values* (factor 1) consists of following variables: Individual freedom (0.84), Security (0.83), Human rights (0.80), Democracy (0.74), Equality (0.69). The second factor, *socioeconomic values*, include: Employment (0.89), Economic welfare of citizens (0.83) and Rule of law (0.64).

[74] The joint variance of the extracted factor was 62.54 per cent, with a value saturation between 0.84 to 0.69.

[75] Given the predominant perception of positive changes resulting from Croatia's EU integration, the finding that young Croatians support the country's continuing EU membership was not unexpected. According to the research

results, this support was solid: 67 per cent of respondents thought that the country should not leave the EU, ten per cent thought it should, and 23 per cent had not formed any opinion on the matter. This latter opinion was particularly prevalent among the youngest participants ($\chi^2=16.52$) with lower-secondary-level education ($\chi^2=19.10$), whereas the oldest and higher-education-level cohort were slightly more likely to hold the opinion that Croatia ought to leave the European Union, which was consistent with their previously voiced scepticism regarding how successful Croatia's European integration has been.

[76] Principal component analysis extracted three factors which explained 57.53 per cent of variance. The first factor, *positive socioeconomic and political effects of integration*, includes: Higher living standards of the people in Croatia (0.81), Better employment opportunities in Croatia (0.81), Better quality and faster economic development of Croatia (0.80), Better quality of education in Croatia (0.75), Faster democratisation of society (0.68), More successful realisation of Croatian interests in European politics (0.66), Better military protection of Croatia (0.61); *negative political and socioeconomic effects of integration* (factor 2): Infringement of the sovereignty of the Croatian state (0.76), Limiting the economic development of Croatia (0.75), Endangering the national identity of the Croatian people (0.72) Dependency of Croatia on developed European countries (culturally, economically, politically) (0.59); *positive sociocultural effects of integration* (factor 3): Greater opportunities for traveling and making friends (0.48), Gaining better knowledge of cultures and religions of other nations (0.77) Better protection of human and minorities' rights (0.45).

[77] FES Youth in East Europe (YEE) studies <http://projects.ff.uni-mb.si/cepss/index.php/youth-studies/>, accessed on 15 February 2018.

[78] A qualitative study of potential youth migration carried out in 2017 (Adamović and Potočnik 2017) determined that focus-group participants were reluctant to emigrate: a greater number of them would change their minds if they could not fulfil their personal and career goals. Reasons for preferring to stay in Croatia included: satisfaction with their current living situation, familial attachment, (local)patriotism, and perceived difficulties with moving abroad. On the other hand, those more inclined to leave and stay abroad for a longer period of time identified pull factors varying from the influence of friends who have already emigrated, education, employment, all the way to general dissatisfaction with life in Croatia and political reasons. One segment of participants identified living in a "country with more order", where their education and work would be adequately appreciated, as a primary impact of living abroad.

[79] Book ownership within a household is used as an indicator of respondents' cultural capital.

[80] The scales that were used to assess intentions of young people to move abroad in 2018 and 2012 are not entirely comparable. The 2018 round of research used a five-point scale, whereas a four-point scale was used in 2012; this analysis thus compares the potential to leave/stay, that is, the share of all respondents who expressed a desire to move (total) was compared to the share of those who did not express such a desire.

[81] The issue of moving abroad deserves to be examined along with the context of the global economic crisis 2008-2009, which was especially severe in transition countries, in light of the fact that the transition did not end with Croatia's ascension to the EU in 2013, but remained incomplete in many aspects (the structure of economy and the influence of politics on the economy; the institutional legacy of the former political system; poorly executed privatisation; insufficient and non-developmental aid from Western countries) (Haramija and Njavro 2016). Due to all these factors, Croatia is now in the company of countries with regressive economies and high levels of youth unemployment (15-24 years of age), which saw a gradual decline in the period between 2013 and 2017 (from an initial 50 per cent to 27 per cent). Emigration aspirations of young people are very much present, as was the case with other new EU Member States (Romania, Slovenia, Bulgaria) (Van Mol 2016), but Croatia has also felt the overall impact of actual population emigration: the annual number of expats has been steadily rising, for example to 9,940 in 2009, 20,858 in 2014 and 36,436 in 2016 (National Statistics Bureau – DZS 2017), adding up to produce a negative migration balance throughout the period from 2009 onwards. Source: https://www.dzs.hr/Hrv_Eng/publication/2017/07-01-02_01_2017.htm (accessed 18 July 2018).

[82] Gender proved to be significantly correlated with planned timelines for emigration, as all categories (with the exception of a plan to move in more than five years) comprised more male than female respondents ($\chi^2=18.56$). Furthermore, all timelines featured predominantly the oldest respondents, with the exception of plans to move in more than five years, which was dominated by the youngest respondents ($\chi^2=52.64$). The fastest preferred timelines (to leave within the ensuing six months or two years) were voiced by respondents who had completed three-year upper-secondary-level schools, whereas those with higher levels of education (four-year upper-secondary-level and higher education) preferred to move within the next five years ($\chi^2=68.68$). The first two shorter timelines (to move within the following six months or two years) were most prevalent among respondents whose fathers had completed upper-secondary-level education (three-

or four-year schools), while the five-year period was most preferred by those with higher-education-level fathers ($\chi^2=39.64$). Two regions emerged as prominent in this respect: Slavonia (the most common region for respondents who wanted to leave soonest, within six months or two years) and Dalmatia, which was more common for respondents who would prefer to leave within five years ($\chi^2=69.68$).

[83] Comparisons with findings for 2012 are merely illustrative, as the scale of main reasons to move abroad was not identical in both questionnaires.

[84] Second-choice countries ranked as follows: Germany (17 per cent), Austria (15 per cent), undecided (ten per cent), United Kingdom (nine per cent), Switzerland (eight per cent), the Netherlands, USA, and Sweden (six per cent each), while other countries were each chosen by less than five per cent of respondents. The top third-choice potential host countries included: Sweden (14 per cent), Switzerland (13 per cent), Germany (nine per cent), United Kingdom and Austria (eight per cent each), the Netherlands and Denmark (seven per cent each), and Norway (six per cent).

[85] Young Croatians are similar to their peers in the region in terms of how they spend their leisure time (Ilišin et al. 2013; Flere et al. 2014; Tomanović and Stanovjević 2015; Žiga et al. 2015). Other research carried out during Croatia's transition period (Ilišin 2006, 2007a, 2014, 2017a; Ilišin and Radin 2002; Bouillet 2008; Bouillet et al. 2008; Krolo et al. 2016) has shown that the youth level of participation in almost all leisure activities exceeds that of older generations, especially those that take place outside the home, and that this participation starts to wane after the age of 30. Comparative analyses indicate that the hierarchy and structure of leisure-time activities have remained fairly stable in the past twenty-odd years. However, the intensity of participating in leisure activities has changed for the worse, as most activities are witnessing less youth participation, and merely a few are seeing more. The latter mostly relates to the dramatic growth in new technologies and Internet use (Potočnik 2007, 2014a; Ilišin et al. 2013), particularly in terms of communication and social networks. Established trends suggest that priorities of youth have been reoriented in such a way that passive activities are ascendant precisely among those types of leisure-time pursuits which hold great potential for cultivation of and improvement in quality of life.

[86] Given that from the adolescent period onwards youth become particularly orientated toward their peers, the predominance of spending their free time with their families was an interesting finding. This is, presumably, primarily the result of the fact that 71 per cent of respondents lived with their parents, while an additional 13 per cent lived with families of their own, and living in a joint household presumes everyday gathering of the family and attending to chores. This is so-called semi-free time, less likely to include the family participating in a pastime activity (all the more given the fact that 76 per cent of youth stated that they had a room of their own, where they could engage in activities of their own choice).

[87] The fact that 69 per cent of respondents claimed that they often spent their free time doing nothing, socialising, or relaxing, differed perceptively from previous results, which identified socialising with friends to be the most frequent youth activity (76 per cent), whereas being lazy was a frequent free-time choice for 35 per cent of youth (Ilišin 2017). We can therefore presume that our respondents filled out this questionnaire with primarily socialising and relaxing in mind (regardless of the company and location), and not a completely unstructured pastime.

[88] In terms of these ways of spending their free time, Croatian youth are rather similar to their peers from other countries participating in the study, with certain notable exceptions. Namely, Croatian youth spend the least amount of time listening to music, going out with friends, and participating in sports and creative activities, whereas in the "never" category they scored the lowest in terms of reading newspapers, playing video games, relaxing and lazing about. These differences suggest that Croatian youth are less inclined to devote their free time to intellectually and physically more demanding activities than their peers in the region.

[89] Principal component analysis extracted five factors that explained 57.97 per cent of the variance. The first factor, *orientation toward spirituality and social engagement*, contains the following variables: Reading about spirituality and personal growth (0.76), Spending time at youth centers (0.76), Volunteering in social projects, initiatives, associations (0.73), Meditating, practicing yoga or something similar (0.71), Being abroad (0.65). The second factor, *entertainment and relaxation*, includes: Listening to music (0.71), Spending time with the family (0.65), Nothing/ hanging out/ relaxing (0.61), Watching films (on the computer, TV or any other device) (0.58), Shopping (.42); The third factor, *preoccupation with going out*, consists of: Spending time in bars, cafes, clubs (0.73), Going out with friends (0.71). The fourth factor, *orientation toward personal development*, consists of: Reading books (0.70), Reading newspapers/magazines (0.63), Doing something creative (writing, painting, playing music) (0.52). The fifth factor, *pre-occupation with video games and sports*, includes Playing video games (0.76), Sports activities (0.58).

[90] Besides the availability of various activities and free time, the quality and dynamics of spending one's free time depends on financial resources. In this respect, young Croatians' perception of the funds they have available to fulfil their personal needs is indicative. According to the research findings, 67 per cent of

respondents estimated that they had the same amount of money as their peers, 15 per cent thought they had somewhat or a lot more, 16 per cent thought they had somewhat or a lot less money than their peers, whereas two per cent did not know or did not provide a response. This means that, on average, one in six respondents were frustrated because they were not able to afford things that were financially available to the majority of their peers. According to analysis, there were more potentially dissatisfied respondents among the youngest cohort ($\chi^2=25.98$), since the estimate that they had below-average funds diminished with age, with a parallel increase in the perception that they had above-average funds to fulfil personal needs. Furthermore, respondents with three-year vocational upper-secondary-level education ($\chi^2=76.54$) as well as those with lowest-educated fathers ($\chi^2=60.17$) were most likely to perceive their financial resources to be below-average; in this context, the perception of having above-average resources increased with the level of education.

[91] Compared to their peers from other countries participating in the study, Croatian youth were notably more likely to use the Internet for online banking, online shopping and rating products, least likely to download and watch films, and least likely to never play video games. Based on these differences, young Croats seem to be more oriented toward utilitarian uses of the Internet, and precisely in areas which are expected to become a dominant way of taking care of certain things in the near future.

[92] Principal component analysis extracted three factors that explained 53.28 per cent of the variance. The first factor, *utilitarian purposes*, includes the following variables: E-mail (0.77), Online-banking (0.71), Online-shopping (0.69), Reading news online/ getting information (0.62), Rating products or services, providing feedback or recommendations (0.53), For school, education, or work (0.44). The second factor, *downloading and sharing content*, includes: Sharing pictures, videos or music (0.69), Downloading or listening to music (0.68), Downloading or watching videos or movies (0.67), Gaming (0.63). The third factor, *communication purposes*, includes: Communication with friends/relatives via chat or Skype, Whatsup, Viber, Facetime (0.79), Using social networks like Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, LinkedIn... (0.79).

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