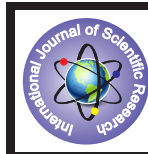


## Communication Sensibility of Croatian State Archives



### Tourism

**KEYWORDS :** European Union, Croatia, communication, archive material

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### ABSTRACT

*The contemporary ways of communication open up new possibilities of archive data promotion and observance of the renewed role of the archive. In this sense, the question is what kind and amount of information the archive society forms and realises through the transformation of historical development of archive as an institutionalised cultural area.*

*The aim of this research was to give insight into the communication mode between Croatian State Archives in Zadar and its users, as well as its representation.*

*The sample of this research consisted of 179 citizens of European and Croatian city of Zadar, 97 male (54.29%) and 82 female (45.81%). Two subsamples have been identified: The Reception section – public representatives, using the archive material for legal proceedings; students, professors and others – public representatives who use archive material for educational and information purposes. The research was conducted in 2012.*

*The proportions difference analysis did not show a significant difference in the defined subsamples satisfaction regarding the communication and custodial role of archives in Croatia.*

### INTRODUCTION

The contemporary ways of communication open up new possibilities of promoting archive material and observing the renewed role of the archive. In this sense, the question is what kind and amount of information the archive society forms and realises through the transformation of historical development of archive as an institutionalised cultural area. The origin of the word archive is *arkhe* (described by Derrida as the place where things begin and where power originates, a Greek city state) and *arkheion* (the superior magistrate's residence), (Steedman, 2002).

Writing, according to the relevant theories, originated from counting. The growth of more complex societies demanded perfection of more complex calculation. The calculation took its place in egalitarian societies; as a necessity in class relations. The earliest records were basically instruments of tax collectors. New archive technology allowed and expressed the social structure. The information culture and archive records were the only phenomenon that always seemed to be connected to the appearance of writing in the hierarchical societies, consisting of masters and slaves, with only one part of population meant to be working. The original reasons of writing usage were based in power, inventory, cataloguing, law and general instruction inventory, in one individual authority over the other one, or demonstration of power through world power possession (Jimerson, 2007).

Since the records were created by the ancient civilisations, the mechanisms of their maintenance developed as well, and the practice of writing and storing archives stabilized and eventually spread all over the world.

The prior task of archives is preserving the material and its protection (custodial role). The State Archives in Zadar (DAZD) is a Croatian information institution which, during its historical development, by managing the information resources and offering information services, shaped its own funds and collections: official and other publications of different origin, graphic, cartographic and similar, with multiple information resource. Croatian archive documentation in Zadar shows that the archive collected and composed databases about materials that can be found in the creators, as well as data on information sources and institutions from where its own sources were complemented. Based on this information and acquaintance with the administrative and business systems for which the activity is performed, the archive developed a role of mediator between those who seek the information and those who have them. The basic

role of archivist is the responsibility of acquiring professionally useful information (archivist should know how to do it), their processing so as to make them useful, managing to make them accessible, that is, mediation to those who need them, the users (Bradsher and Pacifico, 1988). Such is for example, physical handling of the documents – record, protection, preclusion of destruction, renewing and public representation via different media. The communication role of DAZD was manifested since 1901, when the archive started to engage in publicity, informing the public about the material, reminding of the value of the material in their depositories.

The contemporary ways of communication open new possibilities of promoting archive material and observing the renewed role of archives. In this sense, the question is what kind and amount of information the archive society forms and realises through the transformation of historical development of archive as an institutionalised cultural area.

The aim of this research was to give insight into the communication mode between Croatian State Archives in Zadar and its users, as well as its representation.

### METHOD

The sample of this research was made up of 179 citizens of European and Croatian city of Zadar, 97 male (54.29%) and 82 female (45.81%).

A survey was applied on the examinees, and the questionnaire was anonymous. The examination was performed once, during the 2012. The offered answers were defined on the Likert scale in the following mode: 1 – very unsatisfied; 2 – unsatisfied; 3 – neutral; 4 – very satisfied; 5 – extremely satisfied.

The dependant variable in this research was the satisfaction of DAZD users (Y), and the independent variables were: DAZD organised workshops and seminars ( $X_1$ ) and the efficiency and accessibility of DAZD information ( $X_2$ ).

The analysis of difference between the interested public satisfaction frequency proportions will ascertain possible significant difference of communication and custodial role of archive in Croatia. The quantitative processing will be performed by *Statistica Ver. 11.00* computer package.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The first offered claim was defined as:

#### 1. I am satisfied by the organised seminars and workshops

**of the Croatian State Archives in Zadar, with the purpose of demonstration of modes of usage of archive material.**

The frequency descriptive parameters of obtained answers and relative values of interested public participants satisfaction degree relative values, regarding the organised workshops and seminars of Croatian State Archives in Zadar, is shown in Table 1.

**Table 1. The frequency and relative values of Satisfaction by the organised seminars and workshops of the Croatian State Archives in Zadar, with the purpose of demonstration of modes of usage of archive material**

Variables	Reception section N=50		Students, professors, other, N=129		p
	Freq	%	Freq	%	
Very unsatisfied 1	6	12.00	12	9.30	0.213
Unsatisfied 2	8	16.00	17	13.18	0.317
Neutral 3	10	20.00	21	16.28	0.276
Very satisfied 4	14	28.00	52	40.31	0.611
Extremely satisfied 5	12	24.00	27	20.93	0.326

**Freq – frequency, % - frequency relative values, p – level of difference analysis statistic significance in the frequency proportions**

The examinees of Reception section represent public participants who use the archive material for the evidential purpose of the legal affairs (building permits, judgements, payrolls, contracts etc.). The highest frequency was found in the very satisfied answer, with the relative value of 28.00%. 24.00% or 12 examinees were extremely satisfied, and 20.00% of Reception section representatives were indifferent to the claim *Satisfaction by the organised seminars and workshops of the Croatian State Archives in Zadar, with the purpose of demonstration of modes of usage of archive material*. 28.00% or 14 examinees were unsatisfied or very unsatisfied by the offered claim.

The examinees subsample defined by the students, professors and other DAZD users looking for the basic source materials for the purpose of learning and scientific research also offered the most positive answers for the claim *Satisfaction by the organised seminars and workshops of the Croatian State Archives in Zadar, with the purpose of demonstration of modes of usage of archive material*, quantified by the relative value of 61,24%, or 79 examinees who were satisfied of extremely satisfied by the claim, of total 129 representatives of the group.

The obtained answers proportion difference analysis did not show significant difference between the defined subsamples regarding the *Satisfaction by the organised seminars and workshops of the Croatian State Archives in Zadar, with the purpose of demonstration of modes of usage of archive material*. The obtained results indicate that the archive community of Croatian State Archives in Zadar still does not have a clear vision on how to improve the communication with the users and develop greater recognition in the local community. The actual necessity of production of national and regional users' studies comes from the necessity of different observation of archive business, which should be more concentrated on the users than the material. This would significantly change the way in which the documents are evaluated, described and how the referent service is conducted and offered. At the moment, more than 41% or 79 examinees in this research are not completely *Satisfied by the organised seminars and workshops of the Croatian State Archive in Zadar, with the purpose of demonstration of modes of usage of archive material*.

**The second offered claim was defined as:**

**2. I am satisfied by the efficiency of Croatian State Archives in Zadar with the purpose of research needs of archive material.**

The descriptive parameters of the obtained answers and the relative values of interested public participants satisfaction degree, regarding the efficiency of Croatian State Archives in Zadar with the purpose of research needs of archive material is shown in Table 2.

**Table 2. Frequency and relative values of I am satisfied by the efficiency of Croatian State Archives in Zadar with the purpose of research needs of archive material variable.**

Variables	Reception section N=50		Students, professors, other, N=129		p
	Freq	%	Freq	%	
Very unsatisfied 1	0	0.00	4	3.10	0.104
Unsatisfied 2	6	12.00	15	11.63	0.473
Neutral 3	18	36.00	39	30.23	0.229
Very satisfied 4	22	44.00	55	42.64	0.435
Extremely satisfied 5	4	8.00	16	12.40	0.199

**Freq – frequency, % - frequency relative values, p – level of difference analysis statistic significance in the frequency proportions**

The greatest frequency in the Reception section examinees was found in the very satisfied answer, with relative value of 44.00% or 22 representatives. 8.00% or 4 examinees were extremely satisfied, while 18.00% Reception section representatives were indifferent to the claim *I am satisfied by the efficiency of Croatian State Archives in Zadar with the purpose of research needs of archive material*. 12.00% or 6 examinees were unsatisfied by the offered claim.

The subsample examinees defined by the students, professors and other DAZD users, who are looking for the basic source materials with the purpose of studying and scientific research also offered the most positive answers to the claim *I am satisfied by the efficiency of Croatian State Archives in Zadar with the purpose of research needs of archive material*, which was quantified by the relative value of 55.04%, or 71 examinees who were satisfied of extremely satisfied by the claim, of the total 129 representatives of this group.

The difference analysis of the proportion of the obtained answers did not show a significant difference between the defined subsamples regarding the claim *I am satisfied by the efficiency of Croatian State Archives in Zadar with the purpose of research needs of archive material*. Unlike the first claim of this research, the relative value was lower, 26% or 25 examinees who were not completely *Satisfied by the efficiency of Croatian State Archives in Zadar with the purpose of research needs of archive material*.

**CONCLUSION**

The archivists have to change their status and know how others see them. Only then they can start to change. Alteration of public stereotypes is not only a problem of public relations. It demands a change of one's self-image, activity and behaviour (Greene, 2013). Archivists have to redefine their professional identity and role in the society. After that, they have to develop a clear strategic vision for service improvement, as well as responsibility towards users. A multiple role of the archivists is important today, since they are the associates of the researchers and information managers, what gives them a strategic advantage because – knowledge is power (Wisser and Dean, 2013). The archivist education and interests also emphasize the ability of analysing the problem, developing the hypothesis and gen-

erating a conclusion, and these competences could be used in analysing different organisations and processing information on wider basis. Also, the archivists have to support their own information technologies resources and connect, by cooperation with the universities and other culture institutions, different disciplines with the help of databases. This research shows that Croatian State Archives in Zadar should organise workshops and seminars with the aim of demonstrating the ways of archive

material usage and improve communication with the users of archive material, with the aim of legal business, studying and scientific and exploratory work.

The altered view could find its reflection in the education of Croatian archivists, that is, in their training for the future. At the moment, the national archivist training is directed towards material management, instead of users needs.

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