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**Sharing Common Culture:**  
Balkan Theatre Networks for EU integration

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**Project:**

***Sharing Common Culture:  
Balkan Theatre Networks for EU Integration***

**Formative Research**

**May 2011**



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## 1. Executive Summary

Since 1994, *Centre for Common Ground (CCG)*, previously known as Search for Common Ground, has worked to strengthen interethnic relations, prevent violence and promote reconciliation in the Western Balkans. Based in Skopje, CCG with its local and regional partners has designed and implemented programs in the areas of education, media, justice, and culture specifically targeting the youth and children as the main bearers of the future “healthy” societies in the Western Balkans.

In partnership with the Centre for Drama Education (CDE) from Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Student Cultural Centre (SCC) from Nish, Serbia and Search for Common Ground (SFCG) from Brussels, Belgium, CCG is currently implementing the project “*Sharing Common Culture: Balkan Theatre Networks for EU Integration*”, funded by the European Union. The main goal of this regional project is to use the power of culture to strengthen participative democracy by enhancing intercultural dialogue, regional cooperation, while respecting and promoting national cultural heritage.

According to the UNESCO Recommendation on Participation by the People at Large in Cultural Life and Their Contribution to it (1976), access to culture means “*concrete opportunities available to everyone, in particular through the creation of appropriate socio-economic conditions, for freely obtaining information, training, knowledge and understanding, and for enjoying cultural values and cultural property* and participation means *concrete opportunities guaranteed for all – groups and individuals – to express themselves freely, to communicate, act, and engage in creative activities with a view to the full development of their personalities, a harmonious life and cultural progress of society.*”

As one of the project’s activities, CCG has conducted a Formative research to define an empirical understanding of how youth between the ages 15 and 19 from the three Balkan countries, FYR Macedonia, Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina perceive themselves as well as their attitudes towards their cultural and social surroundings. This document presents a comparative analysis on the data on youth’s access to culture in the three countries in the region, both as consumers and direct participants, as well as the obstacles that prevent youth from accessing culture. It also explores young people’s understanding of culture as a concept and the benefits it provides in daily life.

The findings of this research will serve as a basis for development of the Intercultural Curriculum – a specific document which intended outcomes the youth from the three Balkan countries will aim to achieve when producing the six theater’s plays. In the same time these findings together with the data on the other aspects of the project, such as the level of collaboration between the cultural organisations, arts professionals and youth leaders from the three Balkan countries and EU organisations, that will be collected throughout the project duration will be used further in the preparation of the Final Project Evaluation showing the changes made in the target group and the results achieved.

### 1.1. Summary of the methodology

The research for this analysis involved questionnaires targeting two main groups of the population. The first measures the attitudes of 525 Bosnian, Macedonian and Serbian youth between the ages of 15 and 19, while the second group focused on 30 leaders from local cultural organizations, artistic and theatre troupes, as well as CSOs working in the field of culture in the three countries. The questionnaires aimed to explore the resources that promote cultural traditions, the habits of the target population as cultural consumers or direct participants as well as the major obstacles that prevent youth from accessing culture. The survey also tried to evaluate the target groups’ opportunities to meet and interact with peers from other communities and countries in order to understand their current level of interaction.

### 1.2 Summary of the findings

The survey in all three countries show that the youth's cultural habits do not correspond to the classic vision of culture (opera and ballet performances, museums): they consider cultural participation as something more related to theatre, visual arts, dancing/singing and reading. The findings also show that the access of culture is limited, mostly due to time, attitudes of the youth and money constraints to a very similar level. The results highlight that youth's cultural participation represents a challenge. Therefore, space has to be created for young people to interact, and for cultural organizations to attract them through events and other experiences. In addition, due to a lack of cultural education, there is also a strong need for the schools, communities, as well as CSOs working with youth to reach out to young people and to find innovative ways of informing youth about the various forms of involvement. Finally, the survey also demonstrates that youth are open to have friends and establish relations with peers from other ethnic groups. However, due to the low level of integrated education in these countries, the civil society sector should develop initiatives for integrating youth from different ethnic backgrounds in order to promote their own culture while getting acquainted with and learning to respect the culture of others.

## 2. Background to the project

In January 2011, CCG was granted funding by the European Union to create opportunities for young people to share experiences and increase their participation in cultural events while celebrating the diversity of Europe's theatrical traditions. The proposed action is targeting the following problems:

- The unequal awareness of access to intercultural arts throughout the region;
- The lack of capacity to work with youth on inter-ethnic communication; and
- The lack of experience and opportunities for cultural organisations in the Balkans to establish partnerships with similar organizations both in the region and in the EU.

Since culture is a key component and indicator of social cohesion and a field where group differences can be highlighted or unity and reconciliation can be promoted, **the innovative approach** of this action is in *giving young people opportunities to explore, express and communicate ideas, feelings and experiences*. This is done by supporting local cultural traditions and simultaneously using culture as a means for local, national and international dialogue and collaboration. This in turn will increase opportunities for greater democratic participation and peace, based on historic European values of coexistence, reconciliation and inter-cultural collaboration.

The **main objective** of the action is to harness the power of culture to reinforce a participative democracy based on the EU's common values by enhancing regional cooperation and good neighbourly relations, while respecting and promoting national cultural heritage.

The **specific objectives** are: First, to create networks and partnerships among civil society organisations from FYR Macedonia, Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina that will enable new networks for cultural CSOs to be created. This can serve as a basis for sustainable inter-cultural dialogue and cooperation within the region and between the region and the EU. The second objective is to use these partnership with theatre organizations working with youth in the three countries to favour youth participation in the production of inter-ethnic, intended-outcome and interactive theatre performances. Third, this collaboration aims to increase awareness of and access to different cultural traditions within and beyond national boundaries through the exchange of cultural experiences established to promote regular interaction, build mutual confidence and lead to joint activities between civil society organizations and local authorities.

**The primary target group** is the group of youth leaders and drama educators from the three Balkan countries, whose artistic abilities and leadership capabilities to empower youth will be strengthened by CCG training and the creation of sustainable partnerships with other cultural organisations in the region and the EU. **The secondary target group** is youth drama teams – aged 15 to 19 – from the three Balkan countries who will not only learn necessary skills to conceptualize, design and produce intended outcome performances, but who will also learn about European values, the role of arts in fostering intercultural dialogue and the role of youth in a participative democracy. **The final beneficiaries** are the audiences of the theatre performances, including those participating in the discussions that will follow each performance, as well as the people who will be exposed to the action's activities through the media documentaries broadcasted in the three Balkan countries and across the EU. They stand to gain a new perspective on European cultural traditions and the role they can play in fostering reconciliation and active civil society participation in intercultural activities in the region.

The project is expected to produce the following **results**:

Opportunities for long-term development of new creative relationships, cooperation and inter-cultural dialogue among artists and cultural organisations from the EU and Macedonia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia;

A network of arts professionals and youth leaders who are committed to developing cultural relations at the grass-roots level in future;

Developed partnerships between cultural organisations, CSOs, educational institutions, youth leaders and the wider community;

Changes in young people's attitude towards their place in the community, in their country, the region and Europe.

## 2.1 Partners to the project:

### **Centre for Drama Education from Mostar (CDO) Bosnia and Herzegovina:**

CDO is a non-profit organization founded in March 1997. It is a regional resource centre of drama education, using drama and theatre as tools to influence how citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina view life, social life, and numerous individual and collective problems. These results in increased mutual understanding and tolerance, all with the goal that in the future drama education becomes part of school's curriculum and thus preventive action helps to bolster growing tolerance among the country's population.

### **Student Cultural Centre (SCC) from Nis, Serbia:**

Established in 1991, SCC is one of the leading cultural institutions in Nis. Its work profiles the city's cultural space. In its programs, SCC brings together a large number of young people, students and the people of all generations who recognize quality entertainment. Through a range of different events over the years, SCC has achieved its primary objectives of presenting new cultural events, cultivating alternative approaches to culture and affirming genuine creative potential. One of the most important aspects of SCC's work is its efforts to preserve the artwork and ancient cultural heritage of Nis, thereby linking cultural heritage with future culture.

### **Search for Common Ground (SFCG):**

SFCG has 29 years of experience in promoting peace and conflict transformation in the countries worldwide. In FYR Macedonia, SFCG has implemented a number of projects focusing on the promotion of minority rights and inter-ethnic dialogue, such as *Nashe Maalo* and the *Mozaik* project. SFCG has successfully worked to transform conflicts in the DR Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Burundi, and Guinea through participatory theatre. SFCG with its team in Brussels participated in the design of the action's activities, focusing in particular on the networking aspect and providing substantial input on the dissemination of EU values

in the Balkans through the project's activities. SFCG will also assist the implementation of some of the action's key activities.

### 3. Methodology

This research was conducted separately in the three countries: FYR Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia and tries to capture the state of indicators at the beginning of the intervention to create a benchmark against which performance will later be evaluated.

The purpose of this formative research is to help defining an empirical understanding of how youth between the ages 15 to 18 perceive themselves and their attitudes towards their cultural and social surroundings, focusing mainly on youth's access to culture in the three countries in the region, both as consumers and direct participants, as well as the obstacles that prevent youth from accessing culture. It also explores young people's understanding of culture as a concept and the benefits it provides in daily life.

Finlan O'Toole (2006) claims that participation in cultural life equals full enjoyment of what it means to be human and exclusion means dropping out of the community and from the full sense of being a human. When people do not have access to cultural life they might not be able to have the same sense of citizenship and may not have such a strong sense of commitment towards the community / society.

**Objectives of the research** are the following:

- a. To inform and guide the creation and development of a curriculum with intended outcomes for the plays. This curriculum document will contain, in measurable units, knowledge and skills which youth are intended to acquire and the attitudes which dramas will aim to affect. It will also define the common EU values that the theatre characters will be modelling for the audience;
- b. To inform and facilitate the conceptualisation of the overall process of producing theatre plays (i.e., creation of the plays' content, the playwriting process, how to facilitate discussion with the theatre audience);
- c. To produce a comparative analysis of the situation among the three Balkan countries and identify commonalities and differences regarding the access to culture for youth;
- d. To highlight areas for the development of further interventions; and,
- e. In the evaluation phase, to assess the impact of the project activities on the target groups.

At the same time, the research aims to obtain findings and to *assess how youth from the three Balkan countries understand the concept of culture and how they evaluate their participation in the cultural process*, taking into consideration the following aspects:

Involvement of the family/schools/ local community in developing opportunities for youth to experience culture;  
Opportunities for and obstacles to accessing culture;  
Level of interest among youth as participants in or consumers of cultural activities;  
Active participation of youth in cultural activities;  
How familiar youth are with, and how much do they use, new media and social networks; and  
Involvement of youth with peers from different ethnic communities.

#### 3.1 Study design

The survey instruments (questionnaires) were developed in the beginning of March 2011, and later translated into the local languages spoken in the three countries. For instance the

questionnaire in FYR Macedonia was translated in Macedonian, Albanian and Serbian languages. The translated questionnaires were then compared to the English original to ensure that no significant loss of meaning occurred during the translation process. The data collection took place in late March and April 2011, and was conducted jointly by CCG, CDO and SCC teams, as well as a team of trained data collectors working in the field in each country.

The survey included two types of questionnaires. The first one targeted Bosnian, Macedonian and Serbian youth between the ages of 15 and 19, while the second one targeted leaders from local cultural organizations, artistic and theatre troupes, as well as CSOs working in the field of culture in Bosnia, FYR Macedonia and Serbia. In each country, seven municipalities were selected for the survey, with approximately 25 youth respondents in each municipality. This means that about **175 youth respondents per country** were involved in the survey, 525 in total. A parallel survey was conducted with 30 leaders from local cultural centres and CSOs working in the field of culture, i.e. with adults who are in the position to influence the creation of opportunities for youth to get involved in cultural life of the community.

When selecting the municipalities for the survey, it was agreed to conduct it in seven municipalities in each country - the two municipalities where the dramas will be produced and five additional municipalities where drama tours will take place. The reason for selecting those municipalities was to enable the project partners to measure the changes among youth target groups (both among youth who will have direct participation in the drama production and among youth who will attend the theatre performances and participate in the facilitated discussions after seeing the performance).

The sample was selected based on criteria such as gender balance and representation of urban and rural municipalities, and was designed to include youth from different ethnic and social background where applicable. Apart from the selection criteria noted above, the data collectors were asked to ensure that all participants were chosen on a random basis. In some instances, the limited number of local leaders (due to availability or access) meant selecting them was not entirely on a random basis. The data collector read out each question to each category of respondents to ensure that no respondent would be left behind. Respondents prepared their response to each question individually, and only after making sure that they fully understood the question. Youth and the cultural leaders were briefed in advance about the subject of the research and it was explained to them that a similar survey was being conducted in three Balkan countries.

The data collectors are sociologists and psychologists from the secondary schools, from the students' centres and CSOs and they are educated and trained by vocation to conduct research and collect data. They regularly implement similar activities as part of their daily work. The project partners had meetings with the data collectors to give them guidelines and precise instructions about the process and the how the survey should be conducted. The data collectors then organized and conducted the survey in each municipality and provided briefings to the youth respondents. After the data from the respondents was collected, it was systematized by the partners and assembled and analyzed by CCG.

### 3.2 Data Analysis

The data was collected from the surveys conducted in FYR Macedonia, Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. SPSS software was used to analyze the data contained in this analysis. The program was used to perform statistical functions on the results obtained from surveying young people and leaders of cultural organizations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, FYR Macedonia and Serbia. The goal of the visual portrayal of this data analysis was to determine and illustrate what the survey responses demonstrate about trends in and across

the three countries in the areas of cultural traditions, participation in and consumption of cultural activities and obstacles preventing youth participation or consumption. Assessing the situation in each location and comparing it across the region allows for a more nuanced picture of what similarities, differences, challenges and opportunities exist for educators, youth and community involvement in cultural activities in the region, which will inform this project's actions.

#### **4. Limitations**

CCG, which conducted the survey in FYR Macedonia, has a pool of trained psychologists which the organization has worked with in several past projects. The communication and collaboration with the secondary schools and the access to interviewing students proceeded smoothly. However, parts of the findings were planned to be presented in order to initiate discussions with the participants of the Regional Inaugural Conference which took place in Skopje on 14-15 April, 2011. Therefore, the time pressure was huge and the strict timelines had to be fully respected. Additionally, in FYR Macedonia as in the other countries where the survey was conducted, the majority of the respondents were reluctant to give answers to the open-ended questions. Finally, there in some of the smaller municipalities where the survey took place the number of CSO leaders or cultural centers was limited. The responses from this target group will be continuously collected during the lifespan of the project, especially through activities aimed at increasing collaboration and creating networking opportunities between cultural organizations, CSOs, artists in the three Balkan countries.

In Serbia, one of the main issue for the Student Cultural Center from Nish was how to ensure the survey being conducted with ethnically diverse youth, since many of them are from Serbian, Roma and Bulgarian community living and studying in Nish and the surrounding areas. By engaging expert associates in the secondary schools, this issue was solved and they ensured inclusion of respondents from various background.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina the data was collected from throughout the country and that represented quite a challenge, since CDO had to coordinate with the data collectors, with whom they also had collaborated in previous projects. The data collectors had meetings with CDO staff to become familiar with the objectives and needs of the Balkan Theatre Networks for EU Integration project.

As mentioned earlier, a slight problem in the three countries was also lack of interest among youth to take a more serious approach and to be more precise when responding to the questionnaire, especially in the case of the open-ended questions. Therefore, special attention and time was given to preparing the field work and to conducting the process of data collection. The aim of the research was explained to the respondents and they were kindly asked to be sincere and as clear as possible in their responses.

Generally speaking, the three partners who organized the survey in their respective countries were satisfied with the level of acceptance, understanding and willingness for collaboration in all communities where the survey was conducted. The aim of the project was positively assessed when presented to local community stakeholders.

#### **5. Findings**

##### **5.1 Basic data**



In Bosnia and Herzegovina, 44.4% of the respondents were female and 55.6% were male. Respondents were between 15 and 19 years old; with 6.9% aged 19 and 27.4% aged 18. 48.9% of the respondents in Bosnia were Bosniaks, 11.8% Croats, 8.4% Serbs and 31% did not answer the question regarding their ethnic identity.

52% of the Macedonian respondents were female versus 48% men. The largest age group was that of the 18 years-old (40%), the smallest being 16 year-olds (12%). 51% of respondents described themselves as Macedonians, 28% Albanians, and a total of 21% belongs to Serbian, Vlach, Romany, Turkish or Bosnian minority.

In Serbia, 63.1% of the respondents were female and 36.9% male. 46.6% of the respondents were 18 years old and 8% of them are 15. A high majority 90,9% of the respondents are orthodox, and include Serbian youth and smaller proportion of Roma and Bulgarian community, a small proportion of respondents are Albanian 1,1%, and the other 8% did not answer the question about ethnicity.

## 5.2 Statistics regarding culture

The first part of the questionnaire was intended to investigate how young people from the three target countries think about culture, how they define it, and how, according to them, their environments transmit cultural knowledge.

78.6% of the Bosnian respondents gave no answer to the question about their understanding of culture while 7.9% said they did not know how to interpret the concept. A small fraction, 5.1%, regards it as behaviour or belonging to a group. Culture itself is only a little important to 34.3% of the respondents; on the contrary, 32.6% considers it very important. 34.3% of the young Bosnians interviewed say their family contributes only a little to their learning about culture. 30.3% says family plays a partial role, and 32.6% thinks family is very important in the process. For 43.3% of the Bosnian respondents, school plays only a minor part when it comes to learning about culture, while 21.9% of them say it is in fact important in learning about their own culture. 34.8% of the young Bosnians who participated think that their local community does not contribute at all to learning about their own cultures; only 8.4% of them thinks that the community has a significant role, while 27.6% said it contributes partly.

Young Macedonian respondents mostly consider culture as group behaviour (33.6%). 21.9% of them thinks it manifests itself as values and norms; the same percentage views it as a set of customs and traditions. For 56.1% of the respondents, culture is very important; it is important for 37.6% of them. Only 2.3% said it is not important to them at all. 59% of the Macedonian respondents said their family contributes to their understanding of culture very much, and only 0.6% said family doesn't contribute at all. Compared to their Bosnian counterparts, the numbers were higher for school's role in transmitting cultural knowledge, too: 47.6% said it contributes partly and 28.6% thinks it contributes a lot. Local community plays a partial role in learning about one's culture according to 48.5% of the respondents, while 4.2% think it does not play any role. 14.4% consider the community's role in this respect important.

For 41.3% of young Serbians, the concept of culture means certain behaviour in society and 28.3% thinks it is about customs and beliefs. Culture seems to be the most important to Serbian youth, as 48.9% of them think it's important and 45.5% thinks it's very important. For 57% of Serbian respondents, family contributes partly to their understanding about their own culture, and 35.5% think family matters a lot in this regard. Similarly to their Macedonian counterparts, 51.7% of them judge school to be partially important when it comes to learning about one's culture, with only 2.3% considering it not important at all. According to 48% of the respondents, local community also has a partial role. 38.3% thinks it only plays a small part and 5.7% judge local community not relevant at all in terms of learning about culture.

Overall, the responses to evaluate the role that different institutions play in transmitting knowledge about one's own culture are heterogeneous. For young Macedonians, family seems to matter a lot, while young Serbians consider has a partial influence only; Bosnians are the most divided on this issue. Macedonians and Serbians consider the role of school partially important, while Bosnians are more inclined to accord it less significance. For all three groups, the majority of the respondents agree that culture is "very important" or "important", which underlines the relevance of the project.

### 5.3 Attending cultural events

This part evaluates the habits of youth from the three countries in terms of attending cultural events. Several cultural venues – theatre, concerts, sightseeing, reading, opera, exhibitions, and cinema – were listed and participants to the questionnaire were asked to indicate how frequently they attend one or more of these events. The aim is to have a general understanding of where young people spend the most time and what sort of cultural events are of interest to them.

For Bosnian respondents, reading (35.3%) and sporting events (17.4%) are the most frequent cultural activities. Theatre (68%), sightseeing (64.1%) and concerts (57.3%) are the main activities listed as "sometimes" undertaken. 91.6% of the respondents have never attended a ballet or opera performance. Based on the responses, in the case of this group the main reason for not being able to attend cultural activities seems to be the lack of money (38.2%) and lack of information (28.7%).

For Macedonian respondents, reading (30%) and attending concerts (25%) are the two most frequently attended cultural venues. Based on the responses, other events are attended "sometimes" only: 56.2% of the respondents do sightseeing sometimes, the numbers being 47% for visiting exhibitions and 42.1% for attending concerts. Also, 88% of the respondent's do not attend opera or ballet performances. 50% of the respondents never attend cinema and 49.4% do not go to theatre at all either. Similar to their Bosnian counterparts, young Macedonians taking part in the survey listed the lack of money (26.8%) and lack of information (24.2%) as main reasons for preventing them from attending cultural activities.

For Serbian respondents, reading (34.5%), concert going (25.6%) and sporting events (25.4%) are the most frequently attended cultural venues. Participants to the survey said they sometimes attended cinema (67.4%), theatre (63.4%), sightseeing (55.7%) and concerts (50.6%). 80% of the respondents never goes to the opera and 30.1% of them never goes to the library either. For Serbians, lack of time (in the case of 40.3% of the respondents) and lack of information (22.3%) are the two main causes for not attending cultural events.

While the figures differ to a certain extent, theatre, concerts and sightseeing appear to be the most frequently attended cultural events for all three countries. Sporting events and reading score the highest for regular attendance. There is not one category of cultural events that stands out as always regularly attended; for all survey groups it is clear that respondents almost never attend opera or ballet performances. Among the three countries, Serbian respondents seem to visit exhibitions and go to the cinema in significantly larger numbers than their Macedonian and Bosnian counterparts while responses from Macedonian participants show that they are less inclined to attend theatre performances than Bosnian and Serbian respondents. Lack of information was the primary explanation for not attending cultural activities with lack of time in the second place, although less so for Macedonians than for Bosnians and Serbs. According to the respondents, lack of money also poses an obstacle, albeit to a less significant degree.

### 5.4 Participating in cultural activities

This part of the survey explores the tendency of Bosnian, Macedonian and Serbian youth to engage in cultural activities, with the aim of determining the current level of involvement, the main areas of interests and the possible challenges.

Street art and theatre seem to be the most popular cultural activities Bosnian respondents are involved in. 16.9% and 17.4% of the respondents participate frequently and 42.1% and 56.7% are sometimes involved, respectively. Participants to the survey said they sometimes also took part in activities involving singing (48.3%), and dancing (43.8%). The responses for not being involved in cultural activities at all were quite high, with 89.9% for opera and ballet, 94.4% for writing or producing songs, 75.8% for filmmaking, 75.8% for creative writing and 77% for craft projects. While 57.3% of the people asked are aware of local cultural outlets where they could get involved, only 3.7% of them are a member of a drama or a music group promoting culture. There is a visible interest in getting involved in drama and theatre groups: 40.4% of the respondents said they were very interested, and 18.5% is partly interested. Lack of time (41.6%) and lack of information (27%) figure prominently among the reasons given for not being involved in cultural activities. As for the benefits of participating in cultural activities, 41.9% of the respondents did not give an answer, 28.7% said meeting new people and cultures was the main advantage, but 13.5% thinks it does not have benefits at all.

The numbers for not being involved in cultural activities at all are quite high amongst Macedonian respondents also. The most outstanding in this respect is filmmaking: 92.8% of the respondents have never directly participated. This is followed by writing music (68.3% never being involved) and visual arts (67.9%). Singing (24%), dancing (27.7%) and visual arts (23%) were activities where respondents are rarely involved. 16.2% of the respondents said they participated in photography frequently, and 15.7% of them have been involved in digital art. According to the responses, 29.9% of the participants to the survey cannot participate in cultural activities for lack of time, and 25.7% think lack of information poses a problem. Money was the third factor mentioned, albeit to a smaller degree (14.4%).

The responses from the Serbian group showed a relatively low level of actual involvement in cultural activities, too. 83.2% of the respondents never participated in opera or ballet, 78.9% has not been involved in music writing, with similar figures for craft projects (68.8%), street art (67.8%), theatre (67.6%) or playing instruments (61.7%). The most popular activity amongst Serbian respondents appears to be dancing (25.6% of the respondents being involved frequently), followed by photography (20.8%) and digital art (17.1%). Serbian respondents have a low level of information in terms of where to get involved in cultural events – only 13.7% of them are aware of such outlets. 84.7% of them are not member of a drama or musical group that promotes their culture but 27.3% say they are partly interested and 32.4% is a little interested in joining one. Yet 26.1% of them express no interest at all in this respect. 47.7% of the Serbians asked said they couldn't participate in cultural activities due to lack of time, and 14.1% said it was because of lack of information. To 12.8% of them money posed to be an obstacle. 37.6% of the participants to the survey think that the main benefit of participating in cultural activities is meeting new people, but an equally high number of them – 31% - responded that it had no benefits at all.

In terms of being directly involved in cultural events, there is significant heterogeneity regarding the preference of respondents from the three countries. In general, there is a low level of participation – most respondents never or only sometimes undertake such activities, with numbers remaining low for “often” and “regularly”. Craft projects or participating in visual- and digital arts are the most popular activities respondents sometimes participate in. Serbian and Macedonian participants to the survey listed photography as a cultural activity they regularly engage in, yet the figure remains low for Bosnia and Herzegovina. On the contrary, while Macedonian and Serbian respondents represent a relatively low number in terms of sometimes participating in singing and dancing activities, a much bigger number of

Bosnians are involved for both categories. Based on the responses, Bosnians appear to be more involved in street arts and theatre compared to their Macedonians and Serbian counterparts. They also express a greater interest in getting involved in theatre projects than their Serbian and Macedonian counterparts. Opera performances and playing musical instruments are activities with little participation from either one of the respondent groups.

For Bosnian and Macedonian respondents, lack of information is the main obstacle to directly participate in cultural activities, while for Serbian participants to the questionnaire it is mainly a question of lack of interest. There is an important disparity amongst the three groups in terms of awareness about where to get involved in cultural activities, Serbian respondents being more informed and Macedonians very little. All three groups list lack of time as the second reason, although fewer Macedonians than Bosnians and Serbians.

### 5.5 The use of internet

The internet playing such a pivotal role in the life of today's youth – sometimes at the expense of more traditional forms of leisure activities – we designed a set of questions to evaluate its role and impact in the three target countries.

91.3% of the Bosnian respondents said internet was important for them. They mostly use it from home (77%). 52.7% of the participants to the survey spends up to 2 hours on the internet, and 38.3% of them up to 4 hours. The majority of the respondents - 65.2% - use the internet for social networking.

Similarly to their Bosnian counterparts, 85.5% of the Macedonian respondents consider the internet important. They spend more time on the internet than Bosnians – 31.2% of them up to 4 hours per day but also 24.8% of them are connected for up to 6 hours. 45% of the respondents use the internet for social networking, while 25% uses it for studying. The majority of the participants (87.1%) use the internet from home.

90.6% of the Serbian respondents consider the internet important, and 45.2% of them spend up to 2 hours per day on it, 22.9% using it for up to 4 hours. 89% of the Serbian participants to the survey surf the net from home, and 69% use it for social networking.

Overall, it is safe to say that the huge majority of respondents consider the internet important for them and spend up to 2-4 hours per day on it. They mostly use it from home and for the purposes of social networking.

### 5.6 Ethnicity and culture

Questions in this category focus on contacts amongst youth with different ethnic background and the role of culture in their behaviour to explore the link between one's own culture, tolerance and engaging with others as well as the current levels of interaction amongst youth.

57.3% of Bosnian respondents said they always spend time with their peers from different ethnic background, and only 1.7% answered "rarely". As for spending time with their counterparts from other countries, 38.8% said they do so only on special occasions and 22.5% said it never happens. Of the respondents, 59% feel they are party free to express their cultural needs as opposed to 37.6% who feel they have full liberty in this respect. 56.2% of the participants to the questionnaire said members of other ethnic groups are partly accepting of their culture, 28.1% thought they were very accepting and 15.7% said "a little". 67.4% professed that cultural values and belief influences their behaviour a lot, and only 2.2% judged it has minor influence.

Macedonian respondents were more divided in terms of spending time with their peers from different ethnic backgrounds. 15% responded “always” to the question, 26.6% said frequently, 29.5% said rarely, with only 9.2% of them saying “never”. 41% of the respondents said they rarely have contacts with the peers from different countries, 1.7% responding only with “never”. 37.8% of the participants to the survey feel totally free in expressing their cultural needs, and the number is 37.8% for feeling partly free. 37.2% of the Macedonian respondents said other ethnic groups are partly accepting of the respondent’s own culture, 6.4% said they were not accepting at all and 26.7% deemed them very accepting. 57.8% of them think that cultural values and beliefs influence their behaviour a lot, and only 2.3% considers it has no influence it at all.

Most of the Serbian respondents spend time with their peers from different ethnic backgrounds rarely (35.8%). 25.8% does so frequently, and 10.2% of them never do. 27.8% of them rarely has contacts with young people from other countries, 22.7% only does on special occasions and 10.8% of the respondents never does. 55.7% of the participants to the survey feel partly free about expressing their cultural needs, while a slightly smaller number (36.4%) feel completely free. 48.9% of the respondents from Serbia said other ethnic groups were partly accepting of the respondent’s own culture, 18.2% of them saying the acceptance level was low. The numbers were quite high for the impact of cultural values and beliefs on their behaviour: 42% said culture influenced it a lot and 39.2% responded with “partly”. Only 7.4% said it had no influence on their behaviour at all.

The comparative analysis of the responses reflects the different ethnic composition of the three countries. A very high percentage of Bosnians have ongoing contact with their peers from different backgrounds, while this number is low for Macedonians and Serbians, who are more likely to interact with different ethnicities “rarely” or on “special occasions only”. The results are slightly more homogenous for interactions with peers from different countries, although Bosnian respondents demonstrate lower levels of contact than the two other groups. In terms of expressing cultural needs freely, the third of Bosnian, Macedonian and Serbian respondents feel “a lot” free about it, yet Serbian and Bosnian participants to the survey were more numerous to express some reservations about it, saying they feel only partly free to express such needs. In terms of other ethnic groups being accepting of the respondent’s own culture, Serbian respondents were by far the highest to say “a lot”, while Macedonians and Bosnians mostly opted for “partly” or “little”. While these findings underline the necessity of fostering more interaction amongst youth from different ethnic and national backgrounds, it also points to the importance of emphasizing the role of tolerance and mutual acceptance.

## 6. Summary of the findings

The findings from each country show that youth's access to culture is limited due to time, attitudes (of the young people themselves, shown as lack of information/interest to gain access) and money constraints. The intensity of these obstacles is very similar in the three countries. Since lack of information was the most frequent reason for not participating or attending cultural activities and events, there is a need for strengthening the approach of cultural organizations, CSOs working with youth, schools and the community in order to reach out to youth and to find innovative ways of informing youth about various ways of involvement. Youth cultural participation represents a challenge; therefore space has to be created for young people and also to attract them to participate in cultural organisations, events and experiences as part of well-elaborated long-term cultural strategies in the three Balkan countries.

It is clear from the responses that the family, the social environment and school have an essential importance in building young people's access to culture, as well as the promotion of the ethnic culture and traditions for youth from different ethnic background. The family environment is important, especially since due to economic reasons the young people tend to live longer with their family and become independent later in all three Balkan countries. In addition, based on the findings, youth spend a lot of time at home, involved in some non-traditional cultural forms such as watching TV, hanging out with friends, being members of social networks (Facebook) and spend a big amount of their time on Internet, playing computer games.

The key to engage youth in culture is cultural education. For young people, school education (art education, after-school programmes, and multicultural education) can be a crucial way of developing their creative potential. Currently, there is no drama education in the regular secondary school curriculum in the three Balkan countries, and the number of weekly arts classes is low, mainly providing theoretical knowledge. Therefore, there is a need for promoting cooperation between schools and cultural institutions and local centers of culture in order to develop projects that will encourage and motivate youth, especially youth from minority and marginalized groups. This would enable/encourage them to take an active interest in creation, production and cultural project making. In this way the youth self-awareness of their cultural rights and the benefits that culture provides for their everyday life will be enhanced.

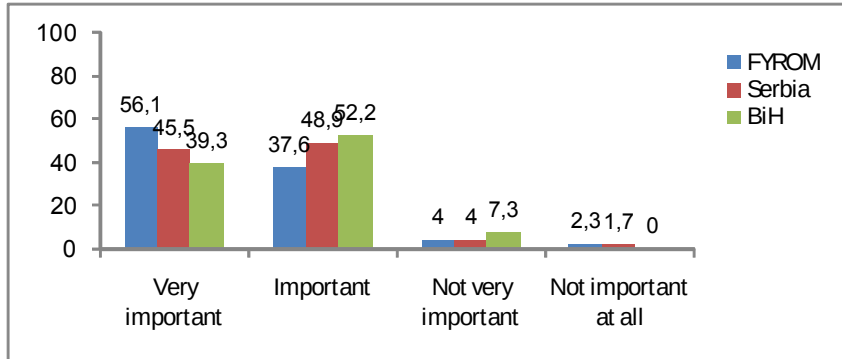
The surveys in all three countries show that youth's cultural habits are far from the classic vision of culture (attending opera and ballet performances, museums) whilst they consider cultural participation consisting of mostly theatre, visual arts, dancing/singing and reading. In all three surveys youth stated that watching TV, together with being online, is their primary activity and an important part of their life. All in all, culture, related to the life and the future of today's young generation should be more connected to new technology and media and the creative use of Internet. However, this should not be a replacement of the live-experience of the traditional cultural expressions.

Finally, the results from the survey show that youth are open to have friends and establish relation with peers from other ethnic groups and from other countries. The current situation in the three Balkan countries, especially in the education sector, is not sufficiently supportive of the integrated education system, despite current initiatives in that direction. Therefore, the civil society sector has to develop initiatives for integrating youth from different ethnic backgrounds, to promote their own culture, but at the same time to get acquainted with and to learn to respect the culture of other groups.

**COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF DATA**

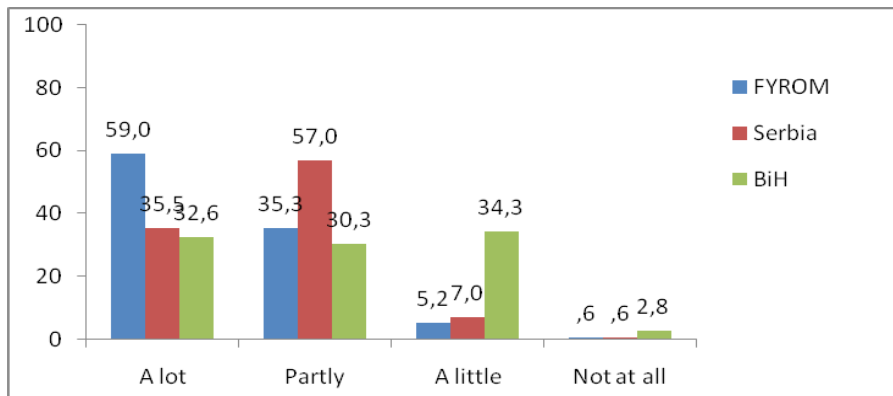
**1. CULTURE**

**1.1 How important is culture to you?**



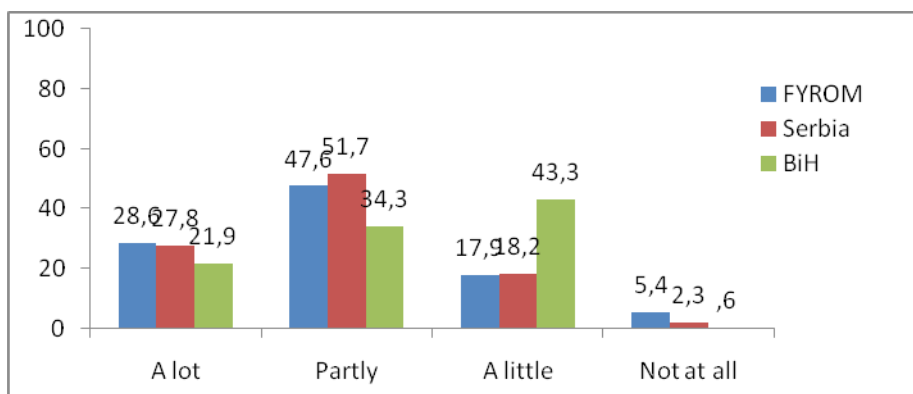
The majority of respondents from all three countries consider culture either important or very important.

**1.2 How much does your family contribute to you learning about your own culture?**



For the Macedonian respondents the family contributes A LOT, for the Serbian respondents PARTLY and for the respondents from BiH the family contributes A LITTLE.

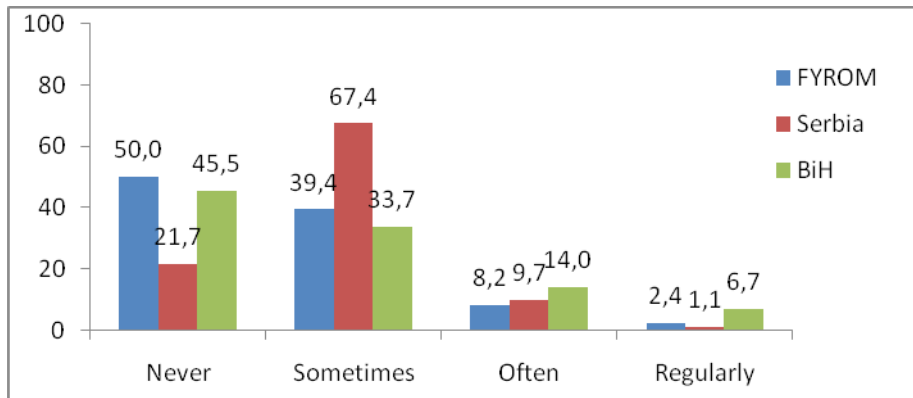
**1.3 How much does your school contribute to you learning about your own culture?**



Respondents from both FYR Macedonia and Serbia answered PARTLY, the BiH respondents answered A LITTLE.

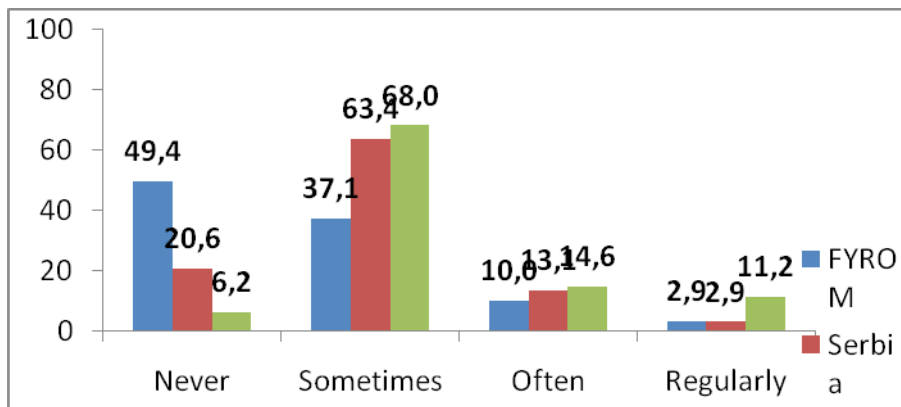
## 2. ATTENDING CULTURAL EVENTS

### 2.1. How many times have you been to the cinema in the past 12 months?



The majority of respondents from BiH and FYR Macedonia have NEVER been to the cinema in the last 12 months. The majority of the respondents from Serbia went sometimes

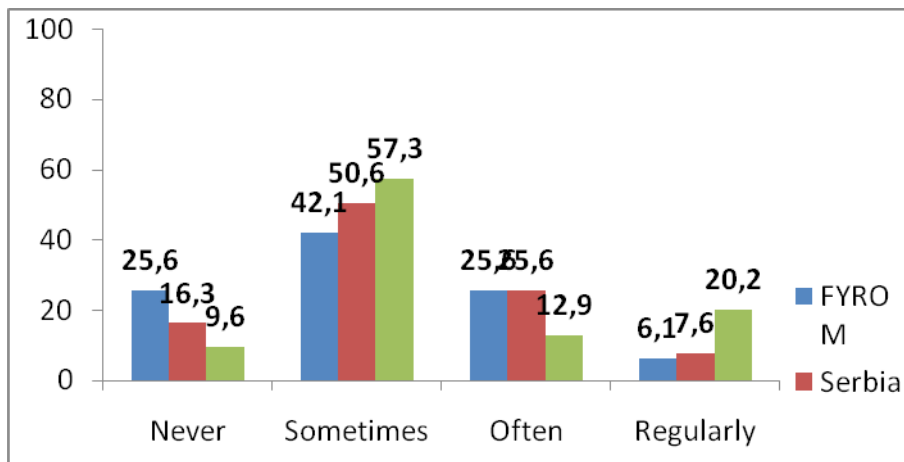
### 2.2. How many times have you been to a theatre over the last year?



The respondents from FYR Macedonia go to the theatre **more rarely** comparing to the respondents from other countries. 68% from BiH youth have been to the theatre in the past 12 months .

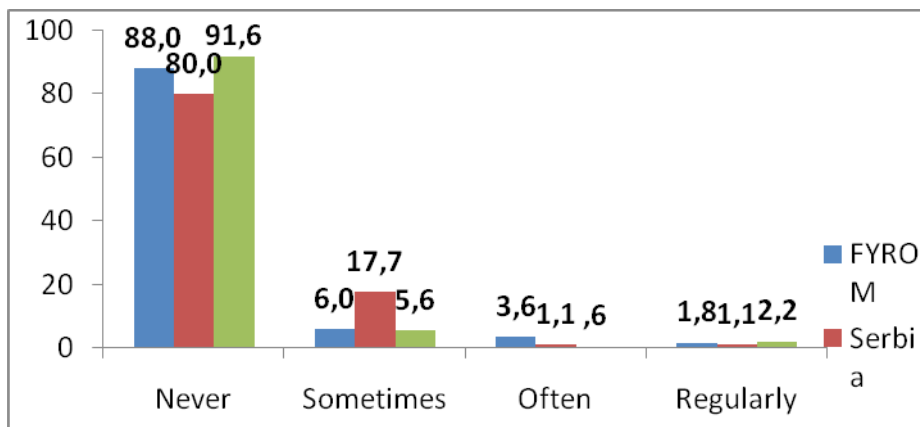
### 2.3. How often have you attended a concert in the past 12 months?





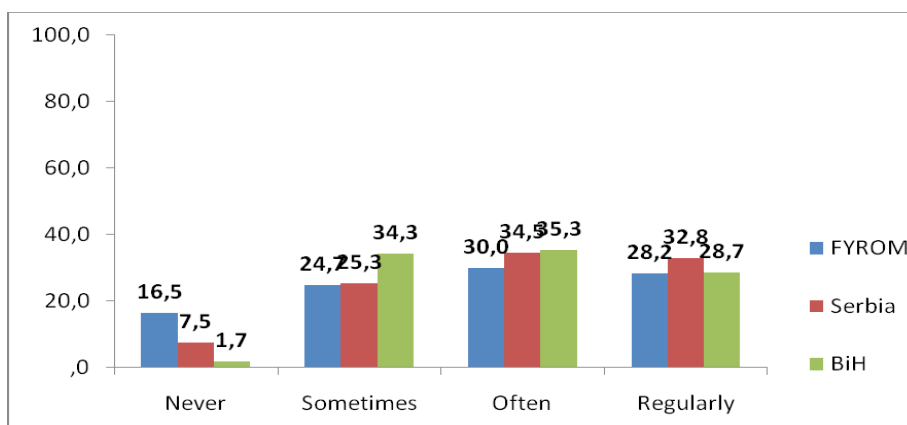
The respondents from all three countries have been to a concert **SOMETIMES** in the past 12 months

#### 2.4. How many times you have been to an opera/ballet performance in the past 12 months?



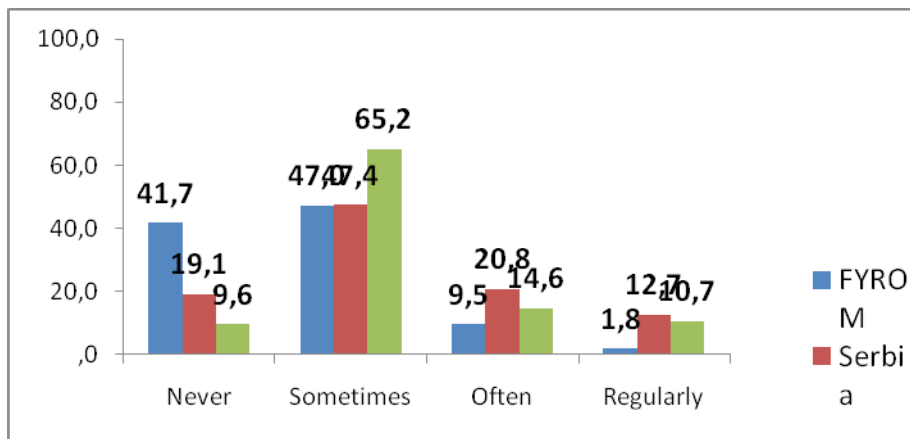
The majority of youth from all 3 countries have not been to opera/ballet performance at all in the past 12 months.

#### 2.5 How often did you read books over the last year?



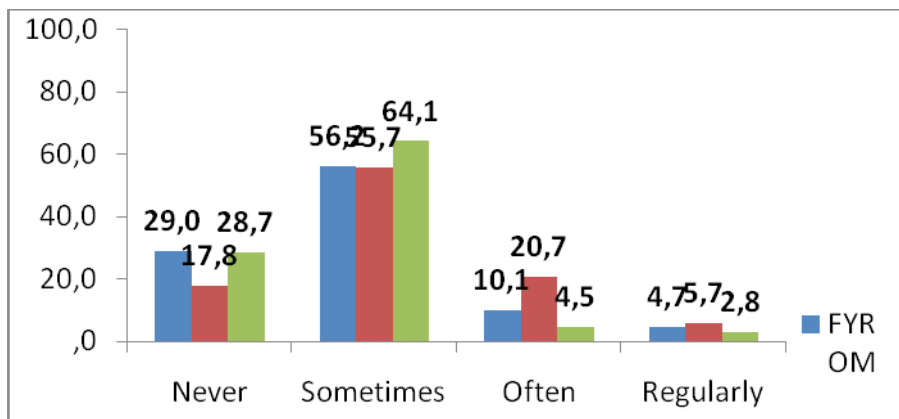
Respondents from all 3 countries **OFTEN** read books in the past 12 months

#### 2.6. How many times have you visited an exhibition over the last year?



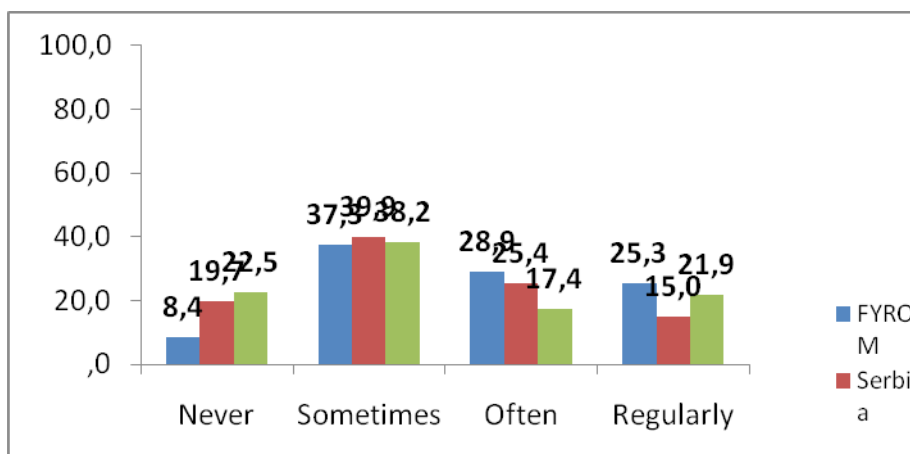
Respondents from all 3 countries **SOMETIMES** saw an exhibition in the last 12 months. Still, 41,7% respondents from FYR Macedonia NEVER visited one in the last 12 months.

### 2.7. How many times have you visited historic sites over the past 12 months?



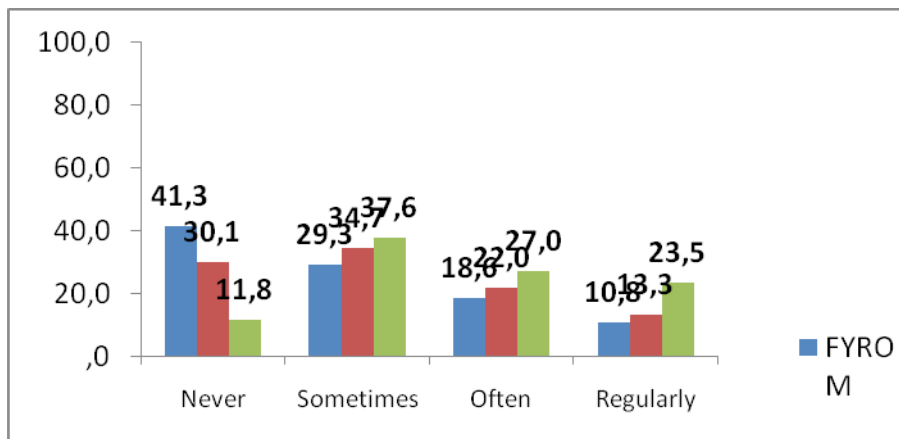
The respondents from the 3 countries have **SOMETIMES** visited historical venue in the last 12 months

### 2.8. How many times have you attended sporting events over the past year?



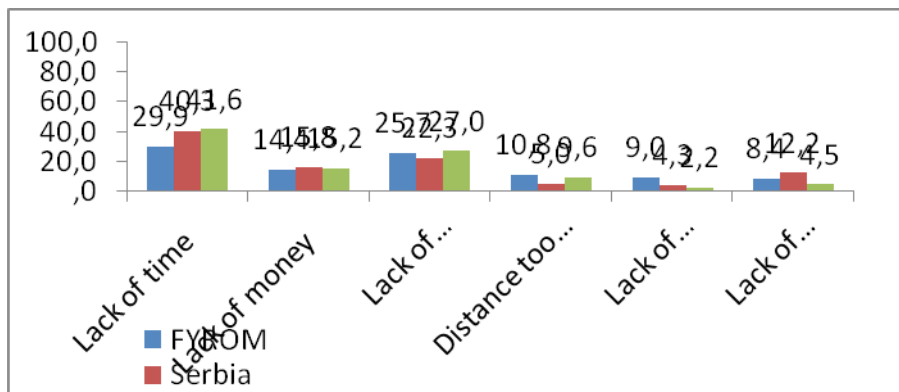
The respondents from the 3 countries have **SOMETIMES** attended a sporting event in the last 12 months, Macedonians doing so most regularly.

### 2.9. How frequently did you use a library in past 12 months?



The respondents from Serbia and BiH more often are using the library. 41,3% from the respondents from FYR Macedonia have NEVER used the library

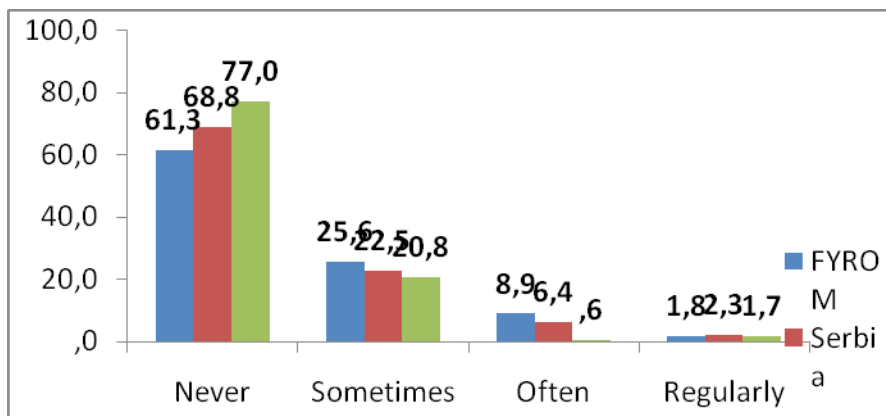
### 2.10. What are the reasons that prevent you from attending these cultural activities?



LACK of time and LACK of information are the main reasons. Another additional reason is lack of money.

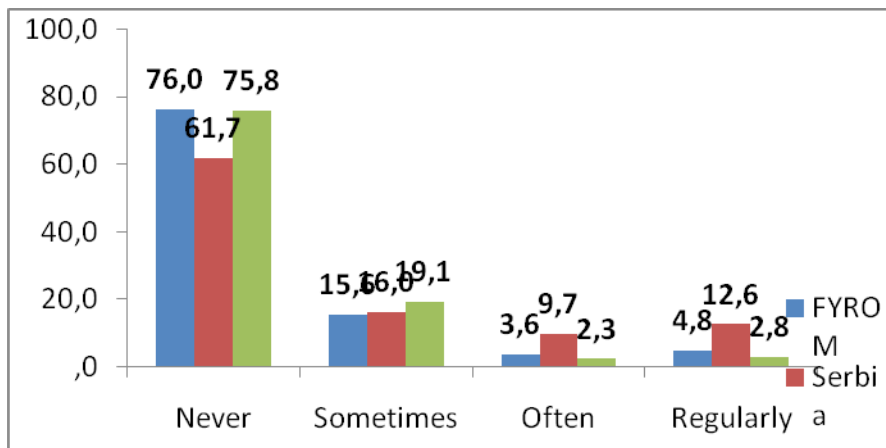
## 3. PARTICIPATING IN CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

### 3.1. Did you take part in any craft projects in the past 12 months?



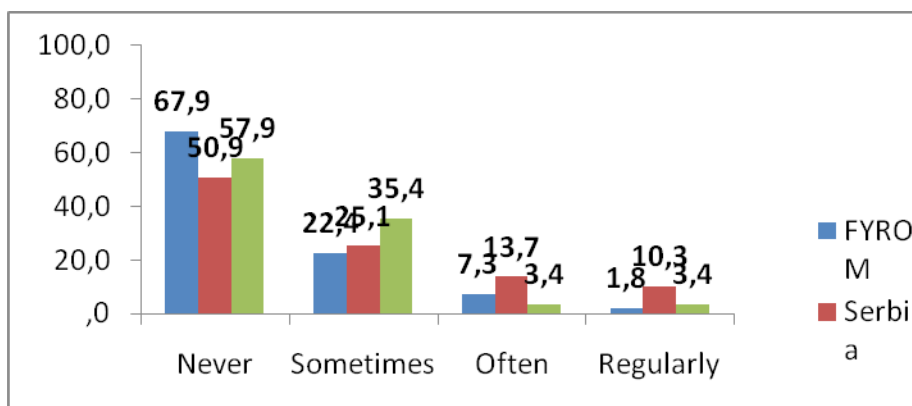
The answer from the majority of the respondents from all 3 countries is **NEVER**

### 3.2. Did you play any musical instrument in the past 12 months?



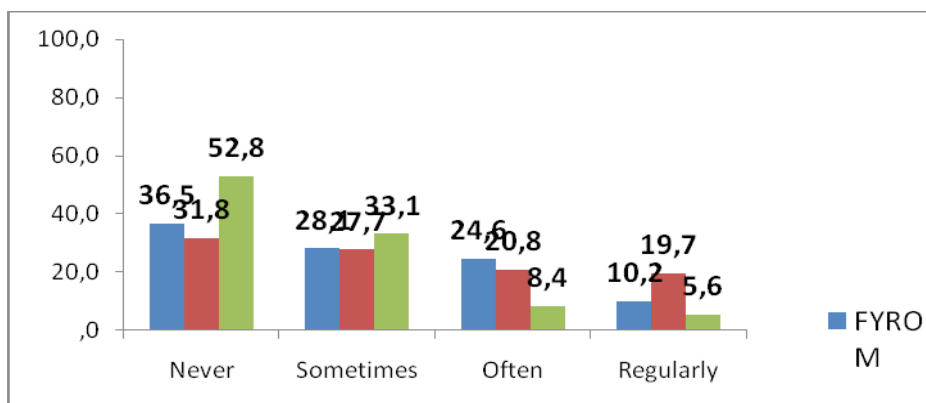
The answer from the majority of the respondents from all 3 countries is **NEVER**.

### 3.3. Have you ever participated in performing visual arts?



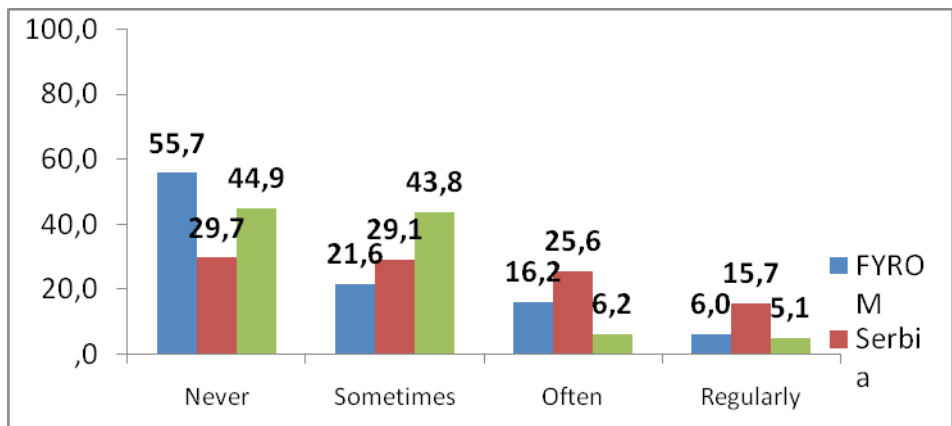
The biggest majority answered **NEVER**. The respondents from Serbia have the highest regular participation with 10,3%.

### 3.4. Have you ever done photography?



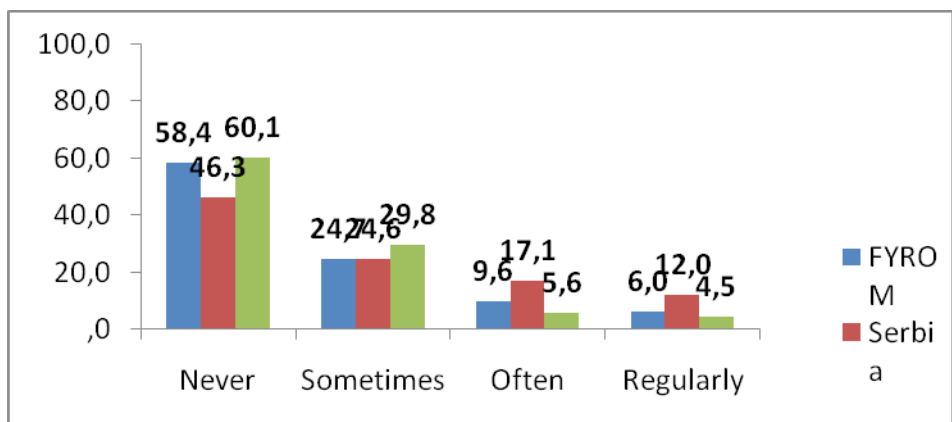
19,7% of Serbian respondents answered regularly, the majority of respondents from BiH answered **NEVER**.

### 3.5. How frequently have you participated in dancing activities in the past 12 months?



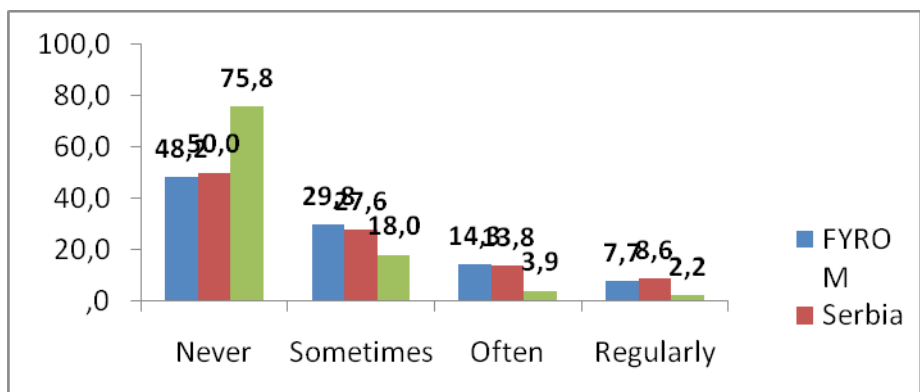
Respondents from Serbia danced most OFTEN, comparing with the other 2 countries

### 3.6. Have you been involved in digital arts in the past 12 months?



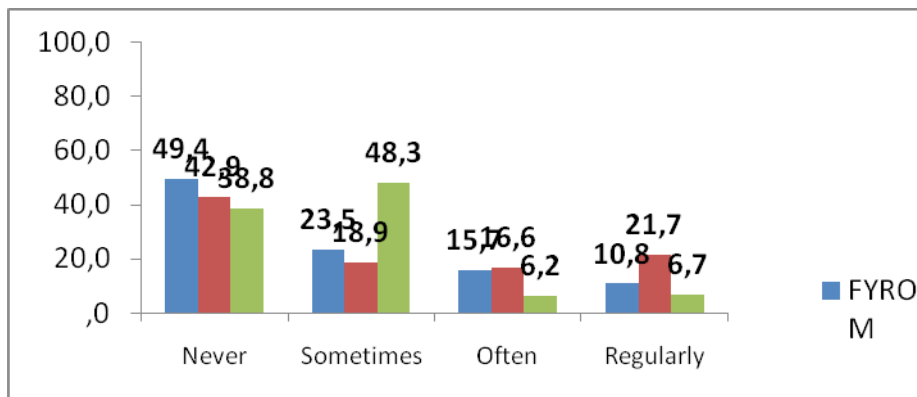
The majority of respondents from all 3 countries have never been involved in digital arts in the past 12 months

### 3.7. Have you been involved in creative writing in the past 12 months?



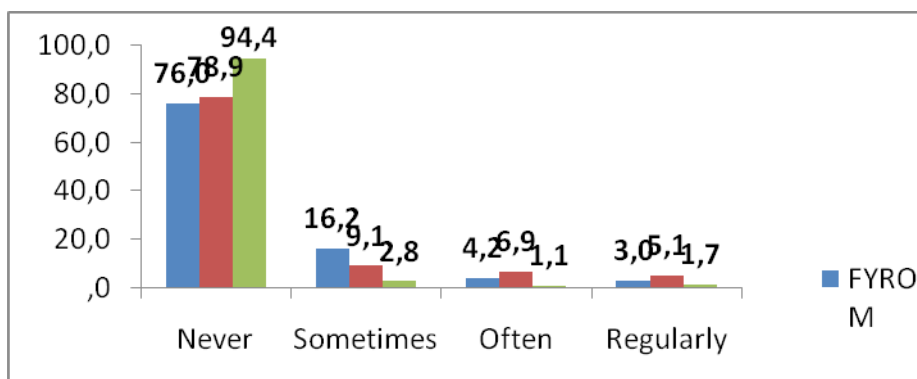
The majority of respondents from all 3 countries have never been involved in creative writing, especially 75,8% from BiH

### 3.8. Have you been part of a singing group/a choir in the past 12 months?



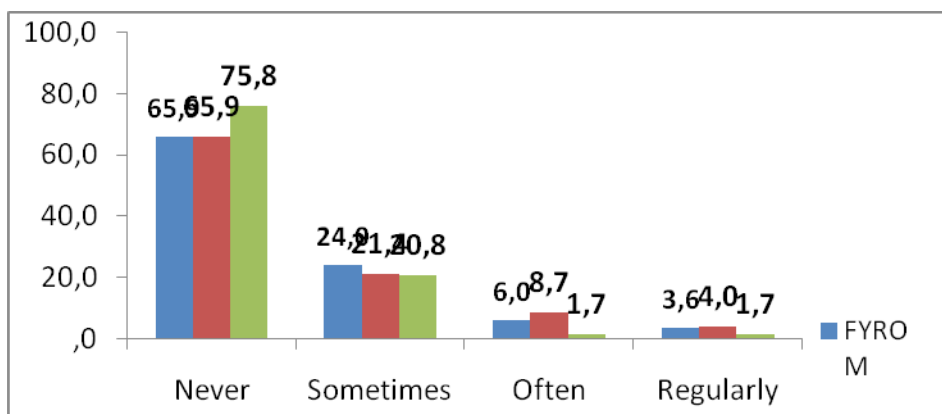
Respondents from Serbia took part in singing activities most regularly, yet an important majority answered never, regardless of the country.

### 3.9. Have you ever been involved in composing music/writing lyrics?



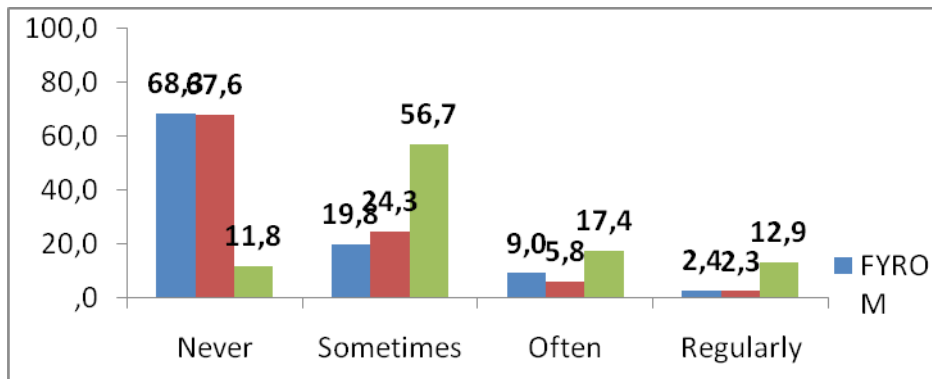
94,4% of BiH respondents have NEVER been involved in writing lyrics, followed by slightly smaller rates from the other 2 countries.

### 3.10. How many times have you participated in video/movie making in the past 12 months?



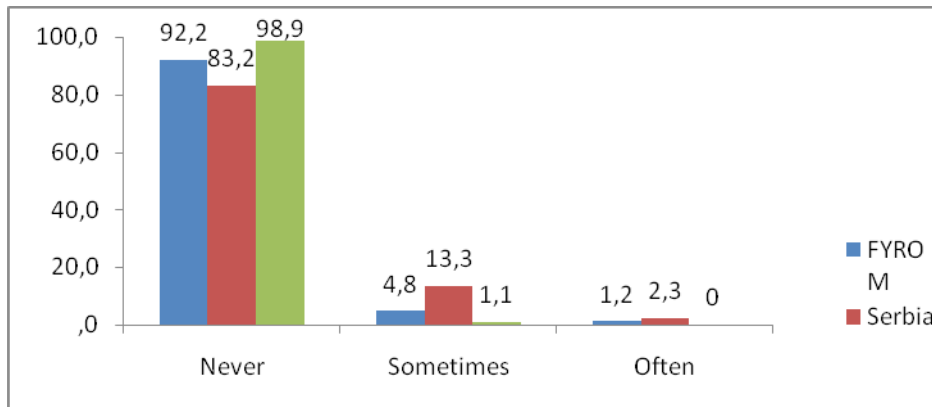
The majority of respondents from the 3 countries have NEVER participated in film/video making

**3.11. How many times have you been directly involved in the production of a theatre play in the past 12 months?**



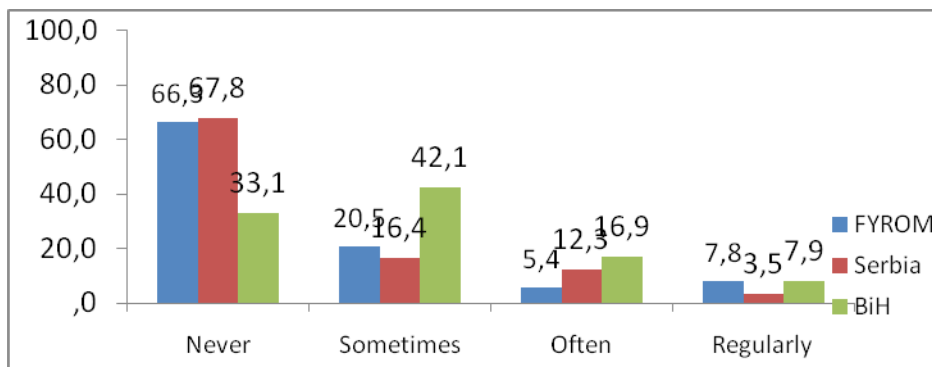
The majority of respondents from FYR Macedonia and Serbia answered NEVER, the respondents from BiH SOMETIMES.

**3.12. How many times have you directly participated in an opera performance in the past 12 months?**



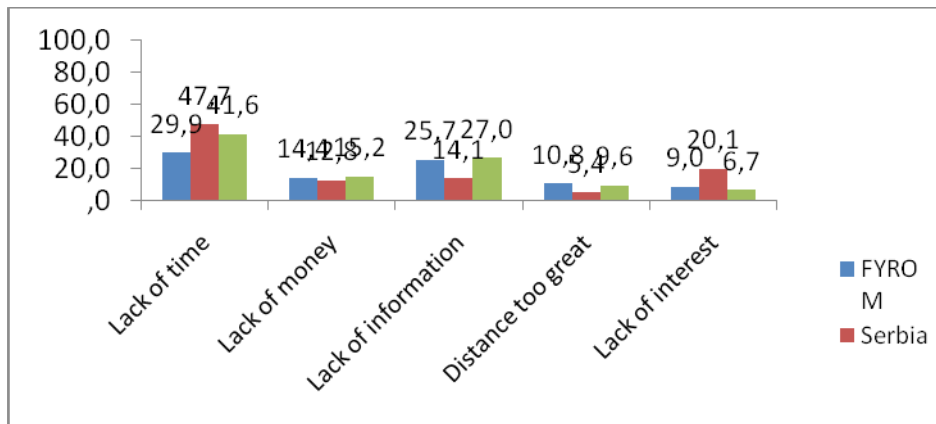
The majority of respondents from the 3 countries have NEVER participated in an opera performance.

**3.13. How many times have you been directly involved in street arts over the past year?**



Respondents from Serbia and FYR Macedonia have NEVER been involved directly in street arts. 42,1% of BiH respondents said they have participated SOMETIMES.

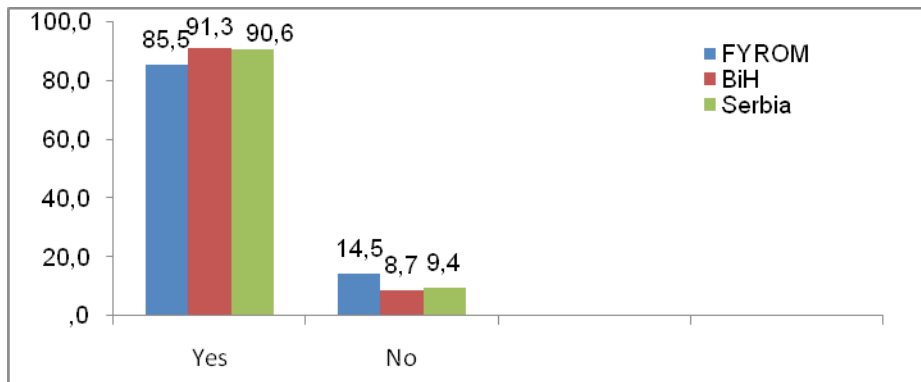
**3.14. What are the reasons that prevent you from direct participation in cultural activities?**



*Lack of time and lack of information are the main factors for all respondents. Additionally, the Serb respondents profess a lack interest for such activities.*

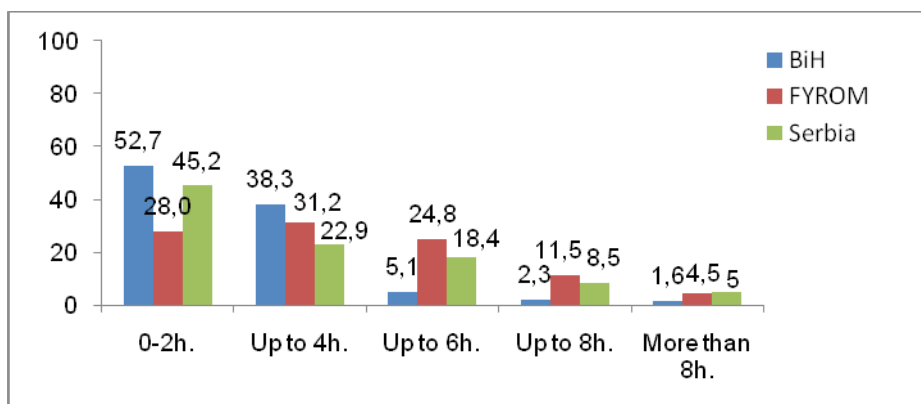
**4. THE USE OF INTERNET**

**4.1. Is Internet important to you?**



*The vast majority of the participants to the survey in all three countries consider the internet important to them.*

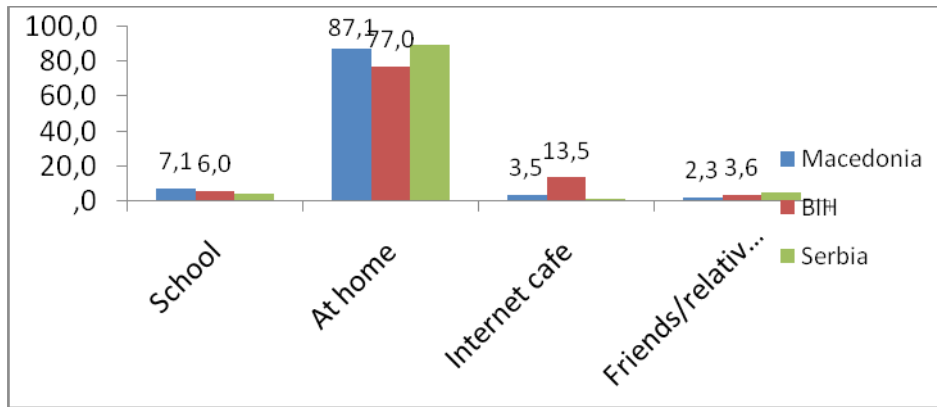
**4.2. How much time do you spend on the Internet per day?**



*The overall majority of the respondents spend up to 2-4 hours on the internet per day.*

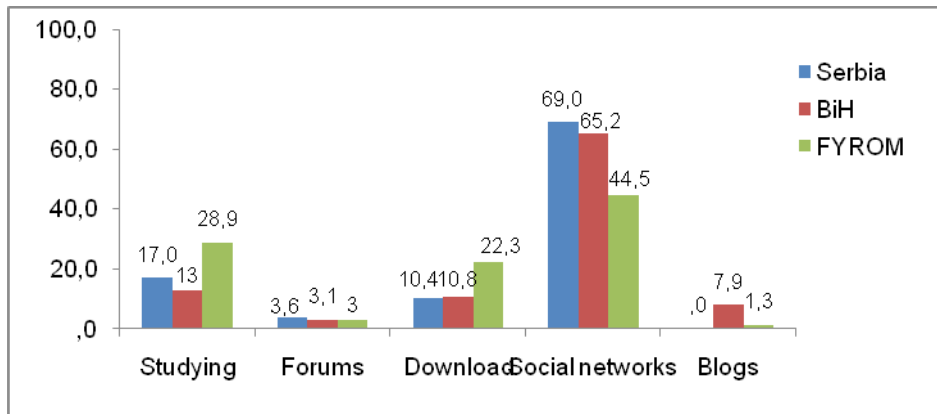


### 4.3. Where do you mostly use the Internet?



The vast majority of the respondents from all countries use the internet from home.

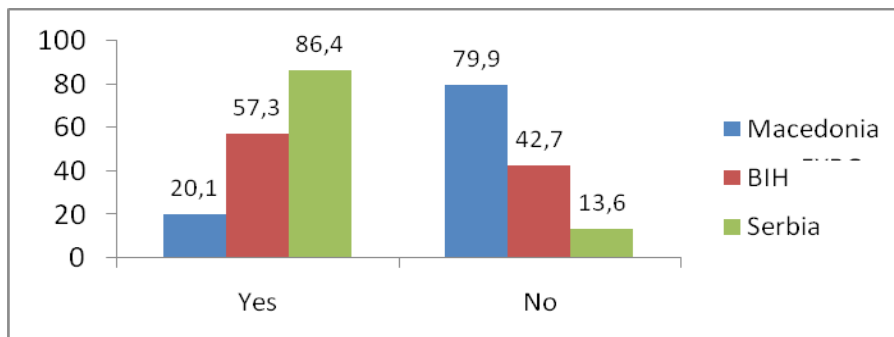
### 4.4. What do you use Internet for?



The majority of all respondents use the internet mainly for social networking.

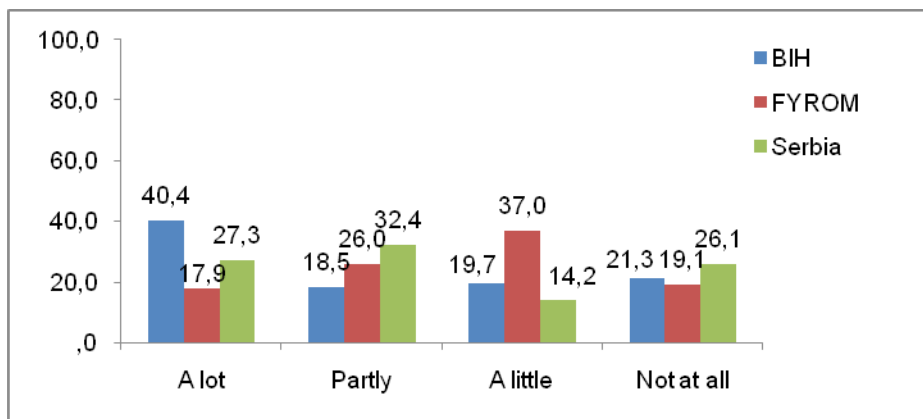
## 5. ETHNICITY AND CULTURE

### 5.1. Do you know any media, cultural CSOs, or theatre troupes where you can get involved?



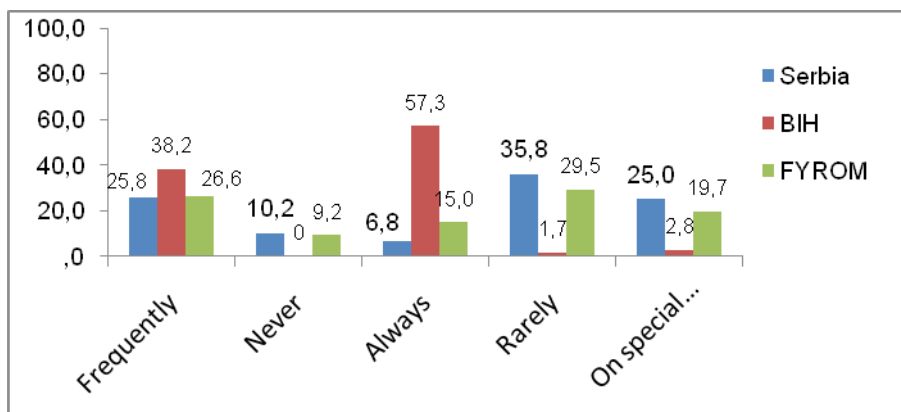
Serbian respondents are mostly aware of the cultural outlets where they could get involved, while the majority of Macedonian respondents lack information in this respect.

### 5.2. How interested are you in participating in a drama/theatre group?



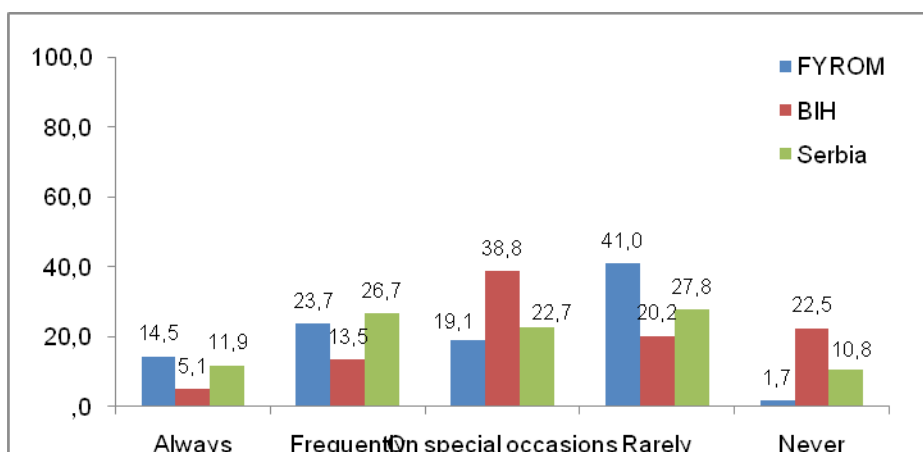
Responses are diverse in terms of interest in theatrical performances. Macedonian and Bosnian participants seem more motivated than their Serbian counterparts.

### 5.3. How often do you hang out with peers from different ethnic groups?



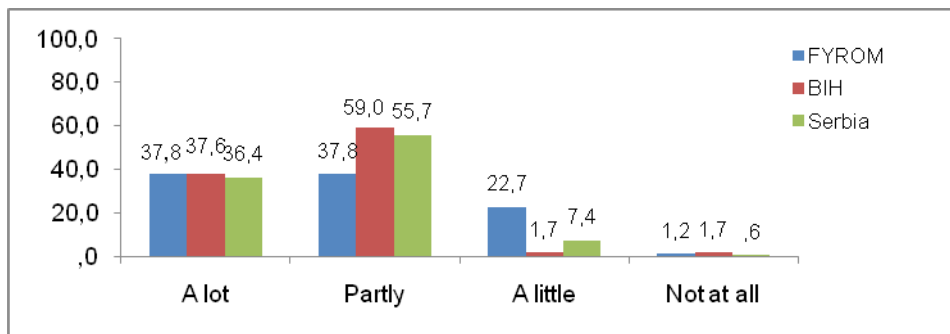
Bosnian respondents are more likely to hang out with their peers from different ethnic groups than Macedonian and Serbian respondents.

### 5.4. How often do you have contact with peers from other countries?



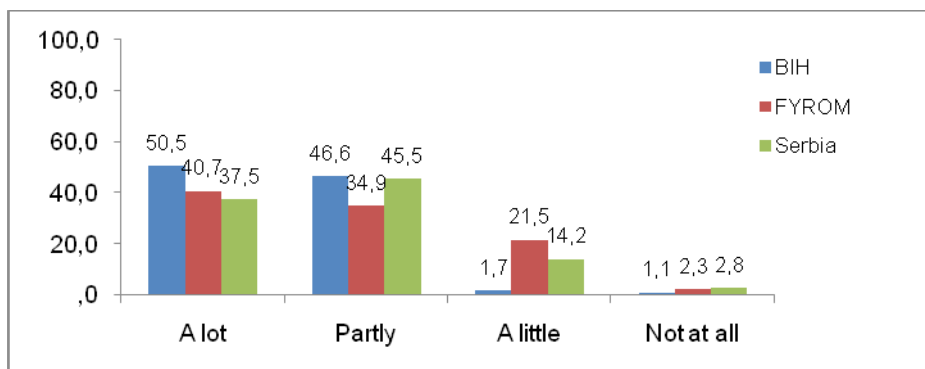
The majority of the respondents in all three countries have contact with youth from other countries on special occasions or only rarely.

### 5.5. How free do you feel in the expression of your cultural needs?



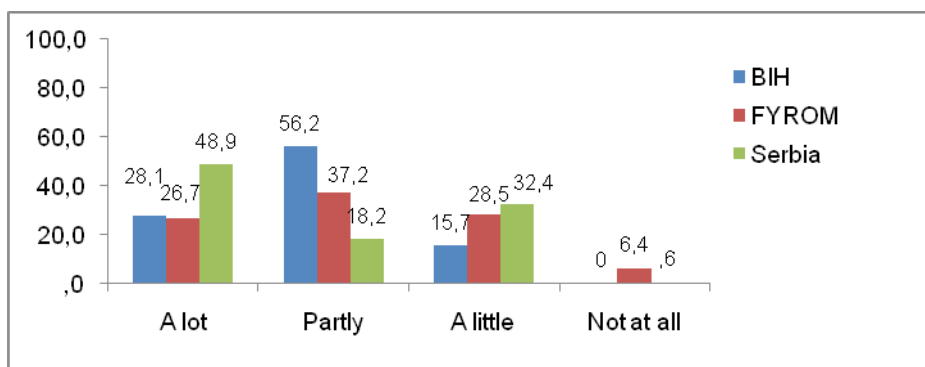
Macedonian and Bosnian participants to the survey tend to feel only “partly” free in terms of expressing their cultural needs.

### 5.6. How free do you feel in the expression of your social rights?



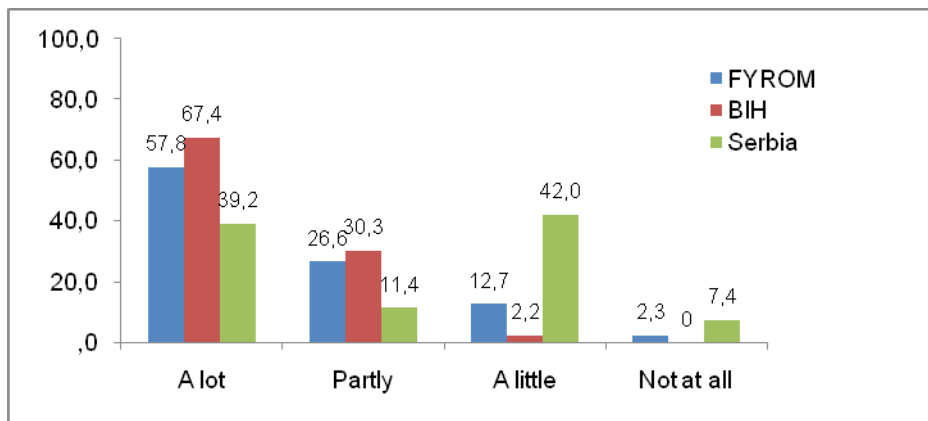
The majority of the respondents from all three countries feel either “a lot” or “partly” free in terms of expressing their social rights.

### 5.7. How accepting of your culture are members of other ethnic groups?



The majority of Serbian respondents feel other ethnic groups are “a lot” accepting of their culture, while the majority of Bosnians feel they are only “Partly” accepting.

### 5.8. How much do your cultural values and beliefs influence your behavior?



*The majority of all respondents feel that their cultural values and beliefs influence their behavior.*